U.S. $5.95

DIGEST GROUP'S

# The MegaTraveller JOURNAL

1

Official MEGATRAVELLER™ Support Magazine

**MEGATRAVELLER**
SCIENCE-FICTION ADVENTURE IN THE FAR FUTURE

# KNIGHTFALL THE LOST LEGACY OF THE LONG NIGHT

Innocent traders run afoul of local politics and are caught up in the battles of the Rebellion itself. But that's just for starters! They become prisoners of war, then fugitives. Along the way, they learn of a fabulous pre-Imperium lost city of high-tech wonders. Can this city's treasures give one side the advantage that will win the Rebellion?

## Eight successive scenarios,

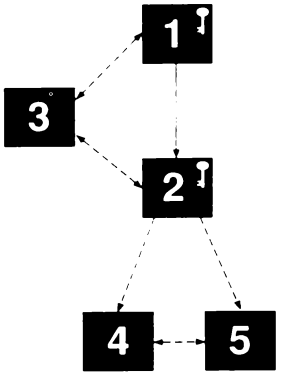
plus assorted random nuggets that together make this a tense, exciting **MegaTraveller** adventure!

Here's an adventure to knock your characters' socks off! Start with an ordinary situation and gradually escalate the danger, the intrigue, and the clues until the only solution is at the end of a long, arduous journey. But that solution is impressive: a fabulous pre-Imperial city of undetermined (but very high) tech level. Somehow, long ago, it fell off the maps, and now only a trail of clues leads to its lost wonders.

Of course, the adventurers are pursued by agents from all sides of the Rebellion. Stopping even for a day can be hazardous to their health.

**Knightfall**'s cinematic nugget system clearly defines and describes the incidents player characters will pass through in the course of their explorations. Careful detailing makes each nugget come alive for the players and referee.

**Knightfall**. A **MegaTraveller** adventure. 96-page book. GDW: 0219. ISBN: 1-55878-062-9. $10.




**CINEMATIC NUGGET FORMAT**

Each scenario is composed of several nuggets: Some are just for atmosphere, but others are identified as key nuggets that must be played.

Each nugget has a *scene* (information for the players on what they see, hear, taste, and feel at the start of the nugget) and an *action* (information to referee on how to run the action in the nugget). Each scenario has a referee's summary on the first page, with a brief description of each nugget by number. This summary includes a special synopsis diagram showing visually how the nuggets fit together.

**Rebellion Sourcebook**

The Imperium is being torn apart by the Rebellion; the once-stable 1000-year empire is rapidly decaying into dozens of petty princedoms. **Rebellion Sourcebook** covers every detail of the Rebellion: the sides, leaders, territories, fighting, equipment.

**Rebellion Sourcebook.** 96-page book. GDW: 0214. ISBN: 0-943580-63-3. $10.


Look for GDW games at your local game or hobby store. If it doesn't have them, it can special order them. Write for our free, full-line GDW game catalog.

By mail, send a check, money order, or Visa/Mastercard number and signature.
Please add 10% for shipping and handling.
By phone, (309) 452-3632 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Central time.

SINCE 1973
GDW GAMES
P.O. Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61702-1646

The publishing date of this issue is February 1991. The *MegaTraveller Journal* is published quarterly by Digest Group Publications and is devoted exclusively to **Traveller** and **MegaTraveller**.

All contents copyright ©1991 Digest Group Publications. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form or by any means without written permission of the publisher. Permission is granted, however, to photocopy any contents for *personal* gaming use only. Portions of this magazine are taken from **Traveller** and **MegaTraveller** materials published by Game Designers' Workshop and are copyright ©1991 by GDW, Inc.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Address editorial comments to:
**MTJ Comments**
**Digest Group Publications**
**515 Willow**
**Woodburn, OR 97071**

The *MegaTraveller Journal* is available quarterly at an individual price of $5.95. Until April 1,1991, one-year subscriptions are $18.00 U.S., $22.00 after. Foreign air mail subscriptions (outside the USA or Canada, but not to APO or FPO addresses) are $26.00 per year, $30.00 after April 1. Subscription payments should be in US funds drawn on a US bank, or VISA/MasterCard. For subscriptions, call or write:

**The MegaTraveller Journal**
**Digest Group Publications**
**515 Willow**
**Woodburn, OR 97071**
**(503) 981-4752**

**Editor & Art Director:** Rob Caswell
**Contributing Editor:** James Holden
**Technical Editors:** Deb Zeigler, Tom Peters
**Copy Editor:** Deb Zeigler
**Production Manager:** Patricia Fugate
**Production Assistant:** Nancy Parker
**Playtest Co-ordinator:** Tom Peters

**Publisher:** Joe D. Fugate Sr.

**This issue's Playtesters:**
Bill Baxter
Bob Willis
Charles Connors
Carl Burke

**About the cover:** Trying to uncover the secret of THE WARDN ENIGMA, a band of characters (including one Khethss from Giranima), train their batteries of sensors on the mysterious lines in the Patterned Desert. Painting by Dell Harris.

**Artists inside this issue (in alphabetical order):**
Rob Caswell: pp. 5, 10, 19, 24, 34, 53.
Bryan Gibson: pp. 46, 48, 51, 52.
William H.Keith, Jr.: pp. 31, 32, 33, 37.
Tom Peters: p. 16.
Blair Reynolds: pp. 6, 8, 11.
Michael Vilardi: pp. 14, 36, 43, 44.

DIGEST GROUP'S

# The MegaTraveller JOURNAL

***Number One***

**Adventure:**

The Wardn Enigma
*By J. Andrew Keith and Thom Gressman* ..... 4

**Features:**

A Concise History of the Rebellion
*By Clayton R. Bush* ..... 16

Beginners' Luck: Guide to the Domain of Deneb
*By Rob Caswell* ..... 22

Domain of Deneb Fold-out Map
*By Joe D. Fugate Sr.* ..... 27

Worldguide: Enaaka
*By William H. Keith, Jr.* ..... 31

Deneb Dossiers Special: The Norris Interview
*By Rob Caswell and Marc W. Miller* ..... 42

Dressed to Kill: An Intimate Look at Battle Dress
*By Thomas R. Peters* ..... 46

**Departments:**

Helm Report ..... 2
Survey Sweepstakes ..... 3
MegaTraveller Shareware ..... 55
DIS Newsbriefs ..... 56

Digest Group Publications products are available through these overseas distributors:

**Canada:** Andromeda Publications, 2113 Dundas St. West, Toronto, ON M6R 1X1, Canada; L'Avenir International, 4980 Buchan, Suite 101, Montreal, PQ H4P 158, Canada; TD Imports, 47 Stradbrooke Pl. S.W., Calgary, AB T3H 2A3, Canada; TD Imports East, 20 Parkhill Rd. East, Cambridge, ON N1R 1P2, Canada; Welcan Distributors, 406-12914 Anvil Way, Surrey, BC V3W 8E7, Canada.

**England:** Chris Harvey Games, c/o Matthew Harvey & Co. Ltd., P.O. 38, Bath Street, Walsall, West Midlands, WS1 3BY, England; Esdevium Games, 2, Morley, Surrey GU9 8LY, England; Virgin Retail Ltd., 95-99 Ladbroke Gove, London W11 1PG, England; Cosmos Games, 15 Webeck Street, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts NG17 4AY, England.

**Australia:** The Jedko Games Co. Pty. Ltd., 134 Cochranes Rd., P.O. Box 164, Moorabbin, Victoria 3189, Australia.

**Germany:** Fantastic Shop, Konkordiastraße.61, Postfach:21 01 65, 4000 Düsseldorf 1, Federal Republic of Germany.

**Spain:** Central de Jocs, C/Provença 85, 08029 Barcelona, Spain; Jocs & Games, C/ Muntaner, 193, 08036 Barcelona, Spain.

Traveller®, and MegaTraveller™, are trademarks of Game Designers' Workshop. The trademarks are used with permission.

# HELM REPORT

**DGP EDITORIAL NEWS AND INFORMATION:** *from the desk of Rob Caswell*

**Digest Group Publications has moved to Oregon. The new address is: Digest Group Publications, 515 Willow, Woodburn, Oregon 97071. Phone: (503) 981-4752.**

Introductions are in order — but I'm not quite sure how to handle them. In some ways, this magazine is a new face. In other ways, it's a friend many of you have been familiar with for some time. I guess I should start by saying that *The MegaTraveller Journal* is more than just *The Travellers' Digest* with a new name. It is the next evolutionary step in DGP's MegaTraveller game support.

Let me explain. *The Travellers' Digest's* goal was to bring you on a grand tour across the Traveller Imperium. Many regions that you'd only heard mentioned in background information and library data were finally detailed. You learned just how vast the Imperium was — and so did we.

With the advent of the Rebellion, the task of supporting MegaTraveller on the role-playing level jumped to *formidable*. As the factions of the Rebellion splintered off, they developed their own personalities, unique structures, and goals. We could no longer make generalizations about the Imperium and how it worked. The volume of material needed to support role-playing in the Imperium increased dramatically.

To really enjoy the role-playing opportunities of the Rebellion, we saw the need for a finer focus. *The MegaTraveller Journal* is one of the results of that observation. The *Journal* will turn the grand tour inside-out. Rather than giving you information scattered over the whole territory of the Shattered Imperium, we'll be giving you a concentrated dose by focussing our support on the Domain of Deneb. Why the Domain of Deneb? Well, not only is that where Traveller support first started (in the Spinward Marches), but it's one of the richest regions for Rebellion-era activities.

In this and future issues, you'll be getting the kind of information that *really* matters in role-playing. You'll see worlds intricately detailed in our *Worldguide* feature. You'll meet (with any luck) the forty-odd alien races inhabiting the region in *Races of the Domain. Deneb Dossiers* will show you the people who define the region: the prominent merchants, military leaders, nobles, and rogues. All these features and others will immerse you in the MegaTraveller universe to an unparalleled depth.

Of course, the *Journal* will still help you keep your finger on the pulse of Rebellion activity. Many of our articles, like this issue's Battle Dress feature, have applications beyond the Domain of Deneb. And our *DIS Newsbriefs* will regularly give you a glimpse into the goings-on in the Imperial core.

Like the earlier issues of the *Digest*, the *Journal* will have a theme orientation. This issue, we look at the Domain of Deneb — bringing MegaTraveller fans, old and new, up to speed on what's happening in the region, circa 1120.

In addition to the new features, many old, familiar ones will be carried over from the *Digest. Travellers' Cache*, *(Mega)Traveller Q&A* (which will return next issue), *Medical Digest*, and *Gaming Digest* are just a few. And, of course, we'll always have at least one adventure per issue.

One last difference between the *Journal* and the *Digest* is the cover price. We never want to increase our cover price, but due to rising costs we really had no alternative. However, if you'd like to subscribe, you can take advantage of a special savings offer. If you subscribe to the *Journal* before April 1 (no joke!), you can get the magazine at our old rate ($18 U.S./$26 Overseas). After that date, our subscription rates will rise accordingly.

In DGP news beyond the *Journal*, our latest product, *The Flaming Eye*, should have been on the stands for a few weeks now. This 104-page campaign sourcebook brings you into the thick of the action in the Restored Vilani Empire. More than an adventure, *Flaming Eye* contains new maps and deckplans as well. *Flaming Eye's* interior illustrations are top-notch, being handled by newcomer Blair Reynolds and Tom Peters (whom many of you know for his excellent starship illustrations).

This product is our first which is dedicated primarily to adventure material. It will be our policy *not to reprint* our adventure products. So if you're at all interested in grabbing them, do it when you see them. Once we sell out, they're gone forever.

Later this summer, *Solomani & Aslan: The MegaTraveller Alien Vol. II* should be making its way to the shelves. Following later in the year will be *Robots and Cyborgs*: an updated compilation of DGP's *101 Robots* and GDW's *Book 8: Robots*. There are also some other surprises in the wings for '91 — but that's news for the next issue... (and, trust me, you won't want to miss it!)

Not only do *we* have an exciting MegaTraveller line-up planned, but GDW's '91 MegaTraveller support promises to be remarkable as well. They have more releases planned for the game this year than they've had in any year since the mid-eighties. Combine that with the planned support from Seeker and your looking at a virtual MegaTraveller product bombardment!

We still hear from people who can't seem to find our products in their local stores. I wish there was more we could do, but we've done just about everything we can. Our products are carried by all the major domestic distributors and have numerous distributors overseas. They are readily available if any store wants to carry them. This means that the battle falls in your laps. If you want to see DGP products in your local stores, make it known to the store owners. Unless they recognize that they have a market for our products, they have no reason to carry them. Your local retailers are there to serve *you.*

As a last resort, our products are available through direct mail order. However, we'd like to encourage you to buy our products from your local stores if possible. They need your support to stay in business. It's a harsh reality, but if you don't buy products from your local dealer, they may cease to exist.

And now, a word from our recruiter... As always, we're looking for writers and artists to help us in making our magazine and products. Just send us a SASE and ask for our guidelines. Again, please take note of our new office address: Digest Group Publications, 515 Willow, Woodburn, Oregon 97071. All you'll need is some non-returnable samples of your work which you can send us. You don't need to be previously published. You also don't need to belong to any special organizations. We deal with each of our contributors as an individual. All you need is the talent to produce imaginative work.

Well, enough chat. Read on and enjoy... and welcome to the Domain of Deneb.

# SURVEY SWEEPSTAKES

**MEGATRAVELLER JOURNAL NUMBER 1**

Let us know what you think! Photocopy the survey below, fill it out for the articles you read, and send it to: MTJ1 Survey Sweepstakes, 515 Willow, Woodburn, OR 97071. Three names will be chosen at random to receive a free subscription to the MegaTraveller Journal. Deadline for entries is May 15, 1991.

| | Didn't Read | Not Useful | Somewhat Useful | Very Useful |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adventure: The Wardn Enigma | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| A Concise History of the Rebellion | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Beginners' Luck: Domain of Deneb | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Domain of Deneb Fold-out Map | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Worldguide: Enaaka | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Deneb Dossiers: The Norris Interview | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Dressed to Kill: Battle Dress | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Helm Report | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| MegaTraveller Shareware | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| DIS Newsbriefs | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

1. Quality of Cover Art:
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ So-so

2. Quality of Interior Art:
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ So-so

Name and Address:

## FOR OUR INFORMATION

1. Now that you've seen the first issue of the MegaTraverller Journal, what do you think of it compared to the Travellers' Digest?

☐ Better ☐ Same ☐ Worse

Could you comment on your answer? (If you said better, then why; or if you said worse, then why?)

2. Is there anything you would like to see in the Journal that wasn't in the Travellers' Digest?

3. The World Guide feature can have details in the article *and* the one-page world data sheet as presented in *Knightfall* and *Flaming Eye*. Do you think the one page world data sheet is a waste of space (since the article already has that information), or do you think the sheet, even though it is redundant, is still useful?

☐ Yes, it's useful even if it's redundant

☐ No, it's a redundant waste of space

4. Would you buy a package of a dozen enlarged black and white reprints of some of the better Traveller art from recent products, priced at $12.95 for the pack?

Comments

# THE WARDN ENIGMA

**A MEGATRAVELLER ADVENTURE:** *Designed by J. Andrew Keith, Written by Thom Gressman*

## INTRODUCTION

This adventure deals with an investigation into a naturally-occurring phenomenon on the planet Wardn (Spinward Marches 1727). A series of lines, seemingly carved into the surface of a plain called the *Patterned Desert* on the planet's northern continent, have never been extensively studied due to governmental restrictions. The floor of this plain is literally covered with a crisscrossing array of irregular lines.

These lines, which are visible from space, are gouged into the desert floor by mysterious creatures. Local legend says that these creatures live in caverns deep beneath the desert's surface, and only rise to renew the lines. It is said that the lines are the creatures' attempt to communicate with lost members of their own race who vanished many centuries ago, or with some supernatural force/being.

In a more scientific vein, some experts have known of the creatures for years, and haven't been able to make sense out of their lines. Though not its central source of income, the Wardn lines have created a draw for tourists from all parts of the sector. As a result, the government has restricted any contact with these organisms for centuries, fearing that meddling may somehow damage the production of the lines. Thus, the organisms who produce the Wardn lines are little understood. The referee should make sure her players are familiar with the material in this Introduction before beginning the adventure.

## CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

Due to its problem-solving nature, *The Wardn Enigma* is primarily targeted towards characters with a scientific background. As a one-shot adventure, the PCs can be xeno-biology students at the local college (Gervaan-Zseet University). They can be undertaking a study, under an Imperial Ministry of Science research grant, of the recently opened Patterned Desert and its enigmatic lifeforms.

Another possibility is to make the characters a band of "sci-mercs": scientifically trained personnel who hire out their ship and services to institutions who need them. Many scientific organizations employ such individuals as an alternative to maintaining a fully-staffed and maintained research vessel of their own. Using this background, the characters will likely be in the employ of the Imperial Ministry of Science. They have probably worked under the Ministry before, and thus have a proven track record.

If the adventure is to be run as part of an on-going campaign, the PCs can be hired by the University or Ministry of Science to retrieve the overdue Dr. DunLinn. If the characters are going in without a scientific background, the limited facts can be passed on to them when they accept the job. However, most of their personal encounters before heading to the Patterned Desert should emphasize the mystical aspects of the lines, making the characters unsure of the reliability of their facts.

## THE NPCs

Dr. Ignatius Flynn Scientist 4548B9 age 68 8 terms
Admin-2, Physics-3, Chemistry-4.

Flynn is the very caricature of the old doddering academic. He is short, rotund, and myopic. His thinning white hair tops a florid face with periwinkle blue eyes. However, this comical appearance belies the man's intelligence and cunning.

Dr. Vzan DunLinn Scientist 6559A7 age 88 7 terms
Medicine-2, Admin-3, Chemistry-3, Geology-5.

Dr. DunLinn is a three-quarter blood Vilani, which accounts for his good physical condition at his age. He is also the foremost expert in the area of the Wardn Lines. He is currently engaged in a study to determine the connection between the lines and the dalev-thur.

*Local Experts*

These individuals are generic scientists which the party can contact in Strellin. All have essentially the same characteristics, with only a few minor variations.

- Dr. Timons Scientist 566899 age 54
  Admin-2, Computer-2, Medical-4, Chemistry-5.

- Dr. Knawar Scientist 566899 age 54
  Admin-2, Computer-2, Chemistry-3, Biology-4, Genetics-4.

- Dr. s'Ung Scientist 566899 age 54
  Admin-2, Computer-2, Forensics-2, Chemistry-3, Physics-4.

## REFEREE'S SYNOPSIS OF SCENARIOS

Like "parts" in a book, this adventure is divided into *scenarios*, each of which is sub-divided into a number of *nuggets*. This section tells you what each scenario of this adventure covers.

**Scenario 1. An Intriguing Mystery:** This starts the adventure with the PCs in Wardn's primary city, Strellin. It deals with the player characters being made aware of the mystery, and covers their search for background information on the nature of the lines.
**Scenario 2. Strellin:** This section covers any investigations they may wish to carry out in the city or neighboring starport.
**Scenario 3. The Patterned Desert:** The third scenario of this adventure deals with the party's activities in Wardn's Patterned Desert. In this section, the party discovers the origins of the Wardn Lines, and the nature of the elusive dalev-thur. Also in this scenario, the party discovers the seeds of a virulent plague which could threaten not only Wardn, but any world with which it has contact.
**Scenario 4. Stopping the Plague:** In this scenario, the party attempts to prevent a planet-wide plague from occurring when the dalev-thur disperse at the end of their *colonial phase*. Also included in this scenario are two alternate endings depending upon the party's success and choice of actions.

## SCENARIO 1: AN INTRIGUING MYSTERY

### SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

**1. Too Good to Refuse:** The PCs receive a call from the local Ministry of Science representative, who invites them to his house and offers an unusual mystery.

# Wardn

**Wardn 1727 B756486-B S NI A 505 Dd M2 V**

**Primary:** Gorpram, spectral class M2 V. Mass 0.4258. Stellar diameter 0.4726. Luminosity 0.0268.

**Wardn:** Mean orbital radius 28.5 million km (0.19 AU). Period 46.36 days. Diameter 11,570 km. Density 0.976 (molten core). Mass 0.734. Mean surface gravity 0.899. Rotation period 35h 53m 8s. Axial inclination 30°13'51". Energy absorption 0.740. One satellite. Surface atm pressure 0.49. Composition std oxygen-nitrogen mix. Hydrographic percentage 58%. Mean surface temperature 3.8°C. Native life.

Total world population 59,800. Primary settlements — Strellin, 8,180; Grale, 3,360; Sey, 3,030; Cam, 2,240; Pition, 1,910; Pacal, 1,100. World government civil service bureaucracy. Tech level — high common 11, low common 11. Primary resources — education, agricultural, ores, pharmaceuticals, compounds, agroproducts, software.

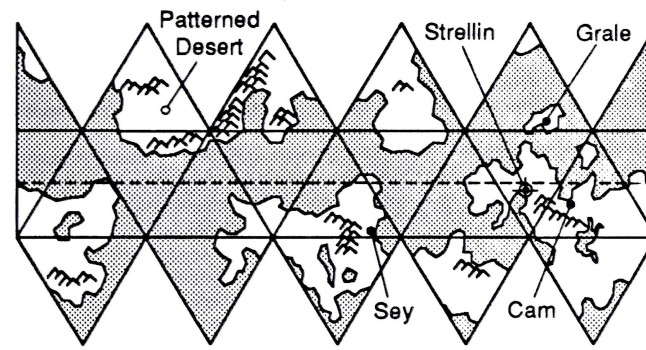
Wardn (Spinward Marches 1727) is a small world circling a red main sequence star perched on the Sword Worlds/ Domain border. It was the site of a seemingly-rich lanthanum strike in the 500's, but the find petered out in less than a century, leaving the world with a depressed economy and low population.

Several notable economic factors have allowed Wardn to survive economically. A local lifeform has yielded one of the most powerful anti-carcinogens yet discovered. Producing the drug from the glandular secretions of this creature, the inhabitants of Wardn have guaranteed themselves a place in the interstellar market.

Another income source is the renowned Wardn lines. These strange lines, cut in the rock by a little-understood anaerobic life form in the Patterned Desert, have proven to be a good source of tourism. The line-forming creatures have never been closely studied due to rigidly-enforced government protection.

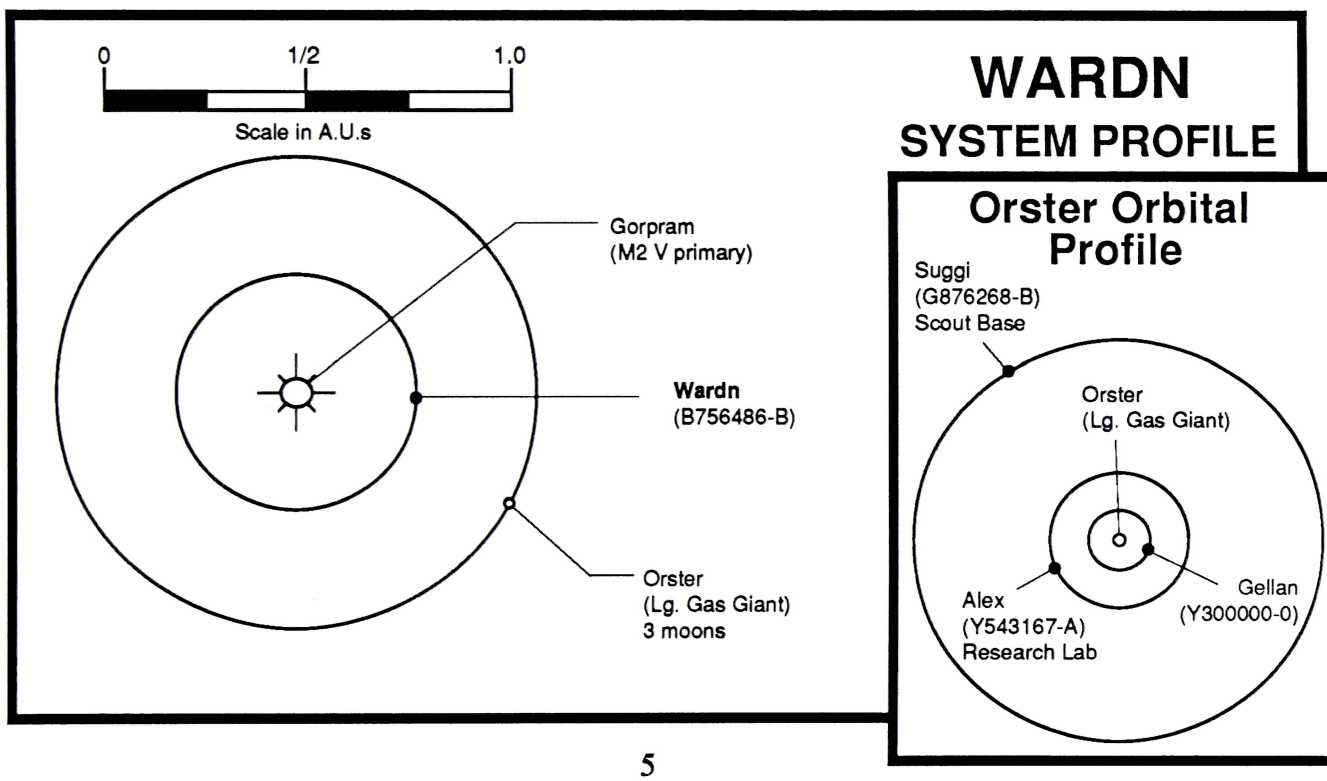
The other major factor floating the world's economy is the Gervaan-Zseet University, a college with a fine reputation in the xenobiology field.

Though the planet's UWP lists the population at 55,000, the total usually ranges more in the 60-70,000 area. Transient students and tourists make up the difference. The equatorial city of Strellin, the world's capital, shows the greatest signs of "transient population".




**Wardn World Map**

Perhaps the largest detriment to Wardn today is its amber zone TAS rating. The planet's thin atmosphere and weak magnetic field provides only minimal protection from its star's radiative output and the smallest solar flare can bring Wardn society to a standstill, as inhabitants seek shelter from the intense radiation. This aspect has certainly had a negative effect on tourism, but the mysterious lines, combined with the world's reputation for exceptional treatment of visitors, have maintained it as a viable industry.



**2. A Puzzling Phenomenon:** This nugget deals with Dr. Flynn's telling the party about the mysterious lines on Wardn's surface.

**1. TOO GOOD TO REFUSE**
**The PCs are invited to a meeting with a high-ranking local scientist.**
**Location: At the PC's current dwelling.**

**Scene:** You return home in the mid-afternoon to find your comm station devotedly blinking with a message. Splashes of orange light glint off items about the room as the screen winks off and on with its signal.

**Action:** When the characters activate the waiting message, the screen fills with the visage of a small, white-haired man with an infectious gap-toothed smile. He begins:

"Good morning to you. This is Dr. Ignatius Flynn of the Ministry of Science. If you have no plans tonight, I'd appreciate it greatly if you'd honor me with a visit. I have a little puzzle which may be of interest to you."

Dr. Flynn goes on to list a meeting time and an address in the heights overlooking the city of Strellin. If the PCs are familiar with the area, they will recognize it as an upper-class section of the small town.

Flynn is the head of the local branch of the Ministry of Science and has a reputation as a practical and competent scientist. If he says a puzzle is "interesting", it is not a statement to be ignored.

**2. A PUZZLING PHENOMENON**
**Arriving at Dr. Flynn's home, the PCs are presented with a mystery and a job offer.**
**Location: Dr. Flynn's house on the outskirts of the city.**

**Scene:** The trip up the Strellin hillside is always scenic. From the hill, one can look out over the sea-front city and clearly see the Wardn downport, squatting on an island about 2 kilometers off-shore. A chill wind whips in from the sea, making you pull your garments tighter. Much of the housing on the hill is underground. The neighborhood rests in and beneath the lush, purple and burgundy flora characteristic of Wardn's forested regions. The air is crisp and carries a sweet smell.

A vegetation-covered, ferrocrete dome marks your destination. Dr. Flynn's Con-Apt is large and well furnished. Intriguing knick-knacks huddle on almost every shelf and in every cubby. The old xenobiologist seems to have done quite well for himself in Norris' service and with his teaching position at the Gervaan-Zseet University xenobiology department.

After greeting all of you cordially, and seeing to any refreshments you might desire, he settles back into a large armchair which is upholstered in rich colors of genuine regaat leather, lights an ancient briar pipe, and begins to lay before you an intriguing puzzle. His tale revolves around the Wardn lines.

"I know you love a good mystery," Flynn finally begins," so when I found that we had another opening for a party to research the Wardn Lines, I had to contact you. As you probably know, the government recently decided to lift its ban on first-hand research in the Patterned Desert. The Ministry of Science has exclusive rights to send parties in."

"We sent in a first party, but the expedition was aborted when the members fell ill. Dr. Vzan DunLinn of the University of Mora has already taken a second party in, where he is currently conducting studies. I'd like you to be the next group. You'll rendezvous with DunLinn, then co-ordinate your efforts from there. I hope you can appreciate what an exciting opportunity this is for us! Centuries of superstition can finally be authoritatively dispelled."

**Action:** There is very little to be done in this section beyond the meeting with Dr. Flynn. If the characters wish to question him further on the Lines, on the research which has already been done on them, or the creatures which make them, consult the following task.

To question Dr. Flynn about the Wardn Lines:
Simple, Interview, Int, 10 min, (Unskilled OK, Safe)

*Referee:* Have the players make a separate task roll for each question they ask Dr. Flynn. Flynn is not trying to hide anything from the characters, he just doesn't know what information will help them solve the puzzle and what will cloud the issue. If the characters fail a test on a certain question the doctor will simply say that he doesn't know anything about that particular aspect of the mystery. If a mishap occurs, the information Dr. Flynn has on that subject is incorrect. It will be up to you, as the referee, to answer ar questions not provided for.

Dr. Flynn knows that there were three previous attempts to solve the mystery of the Wardn Lines before the government restrictions were applied, but none were ever very successful. One mission seemed to have had a degree of success in determining the nature of the creatures, which it named dalev-thur, after mythical creatures in Vilani legends which were huge multi-legged beasts made of living stone. The legendary Dalev-thur inhabited rocky highlands where they would stand immobile for hundreds of years until, for some unknown reason, they would move to a new spot, and again become immobile.

The dalev-thur of Wardn seem to be large organisms with a thick, leathery exoskeleton and a softer underbelly. Little more is known about the biology of the creatures. No one has ever found the carcass of a dead dalev-thur.

No one has been able to determine where the creatures go after they make their yearly migration across the plains.

No one has been able to determine where the creatures go after they make their yearly migration across the plains. They seem to simply vanish. Legend says that they burrow their way into the earth where they enter a vast complex of underground caverns. No trace of any such caverns has ever been detected by even the most advanced sensors.

Linguistics experts have been making aerial studies of the lines, trying to decipher the intricate patterns gouged into the desert floor by their passage, but so far there have been no conclusive findings. Dr. DunLinn has done the most research into linguistic studies of the lines.

Flynn suggests that you pursue some additional research on the subject of the dalev-thur before beginning the expedition. He says that he's sure there's more information on the subject to be found, and suggests you start at the university library.

## SCENARIO 2: STRELLIN

### SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

**1. In the Library:** A search of the university library is covered in this nugget. This is one of the best places for the characters to begin their research on the Dalev-thur.

**2. Official Donations:** If the staff can be persuaded, searching through the local office of records can reveal more insight into the nature of the Dalev-thur. The files of this office will contain any official planetary records of the dalev-thur and would be another good research target.

**3. About Town:** The characters talk to the locals to see what their perspective is on the Wardn lines. This nugget is also useful in giving characters a feel for life on Wardn.

These nuggets can be played in any order. While in the course of searching for data, the PCs should also be preparing for their expedition (buying or requisitioning equipment, and so on). Nugget 3: ABOUT TOWN, may be the most helpful in giving the referee a feel for Wardn's environment and society.

### 1. IN THE LIBRARY

**The PCs search the university library for additional facts.**
**Location: In the library of the local university.**

**Scene:** Buried in the base of one of two significant hills rising out of Strellin's urban areas, the Gervaan-Zseet University seems almost engulfed in the surrounding vegetation. Using Dr. Flynn for a reference, you are able to gain access to all of the stacks in the university library.

Hour after painstaking hour you search through all manner of record tapes, scientific journals, and text books. You've even paged through a couple of books of fairy tales looking for some clue as to the nature of the Wardn dalev-thur, and their lines. Though small by some standards, the library has some astonishing contents, including some ancient *paper* books.

**Action:** Researching the Wardn Lines and the dalev-thur will take quite some time. Though the library is well organized, the sheer volume of available data slows down the search.

Consult the following task profile to determine exactly what information is gained in the search.

To locate data in the University Library:
Routine, Admin, Int, 30 min, (safe, uncertain)

*Referee:* For every success on this task, roll 2D and consult the table below to determine exactly what information has been uncovered. Since this is an uncertain task, treat the information they find accordingly. With a *total truth* result, the player gets all the information listed in the rolled entry. On *some truth*, the information should be limited or abbreviated. If the result is *no truth*, the entry they find deals with the rolled subject matter, but contains erroneous assumptions or facts.

**2:** An ancient, dilapidated book tells of a similar creature which exists in the oceans of Libert/Diaspora. This creature, called a dredge, is a form of grazer which feeds on dead organic matter which has sunk to the ocean floor. As the dredge moves along the sea-bed feeding, it leaves behind a wide shallow channel, which is rapidly filled in by sedimentation.

**3:** Data tapes copied from the original Wardn Lines expedition's report contain an account given by a native hunter who saw several dalev-thur vanish right before his eyes. According to the hunter, he was looking for a wounded desert goat which he shot earlier in the day. It was getting dark by the time he finally tracked down and killed the animal. As he was on his way back to his camp, he came across a pair of dalev-thur, and watched as they simply vanished. He claims that it only took about ten minutes for the large creatures to "dissolve" and disappear.

The researcher who interviewed the man discounts his story on the basis that the hunter was old, had failing eyesight, and has a local reputation for embellishing his stories and for drunkenness.

**4-5:** A linguistics textbook, published in the Sword Worlds Confederation just before the beginning of the Fifth Frontier War, compares the Wardn Lines with the ancient Terran Sanskrit alphabet. The author of the text suggests that the lines are actually the letters of an alphabet so complex and so different from any other known to man that they may never be deciphered.

**6-7:** By comparing illustrations from several sources, including records obtained from the Imperial Interstellar Scout Service, you discover that similar lines exist on a number of planets all across charted space. The most notable of these lines occur on Gzoksirragh in the Vargr Extents, on Haiiro in the HinterWorlds sector, and on the Nazca Plain on Terra. In all of these cases local legend says that the lines are an attempt to communicate with the gods.

**8-9:** A book of myths and legends tells the story of the dalev-thur. In Vilani mythology, they were huge multi-legged creatures made of living stone. They would stand for years in one spot in the rocky highlands of Vland never moving a centimeter. Then for some reason known only to the dalev-thur they would move, sometimes only a few meters, sometimes several kilometers. No one ever actually saw them move, but a story about an ancient Vilani hero says that he rescued a beautiful maiden who was imprisoned under a Dalev-thur for a hundred years, preserved in a magical sleep.

**10-11:** An old copy of the Travellers' Journal of Science carries an article by a Dr. Vzan DunLinn on the Wardn Lines. The article speaks only in generalities about the lines and their origins. Dr. DunLinn says that he is certain that the lines are being made by an intelligent creature he calls a dalev-thur. He is fairly convinced that the lines are some form of communication or writing, and he is currently attempting to decipher their meaning.

**12:** A data tape containing the records of the most recent expedition to investigate the Wardn Lines reports that several members of the party fell ill during the course of the survey, and the mission had to be abandoned. A note to the report says that all members recovered fully after being

treated with a broad-spectrum antibiotic. The cause of the mysterious illness is still unknown.

**2. OFFICIAL DONATIONS**
**The PCs go to the Department of the Interior in search of information.**
**Location: In the heart of the city of Strellin.**

**Scene:** Naturally, the Wardn Department of the Interior is also located in Strellin. Nested in a cluster of organically-shaped buildings at the center of town, the Wardn Department of the Interior is simple to find. Inside, the building is warm. The two walls of the reception area sport holos of scenic Wardn: the frigid beauty of the Patterned Desert on one side and the plummeting water of Kadiid Falls on the other.

A slim, attractive, dark-skinned man greets you in the reception area. Dark skin is the planetary norm, as the inhabitants usually take melanin pills to increase their pigmentation and help combat the sun's destructive rays. When you tell the man what you're here for, he guides you down a set of spiral stairs to a office.

The Wardn Ecosystem Administrator, Tadd Ogniir, stands and greets you. His sharp facial features are not reflective of his open and cordial personality.

"How can I be of assistance to you?" he asks with a pleasant smile.

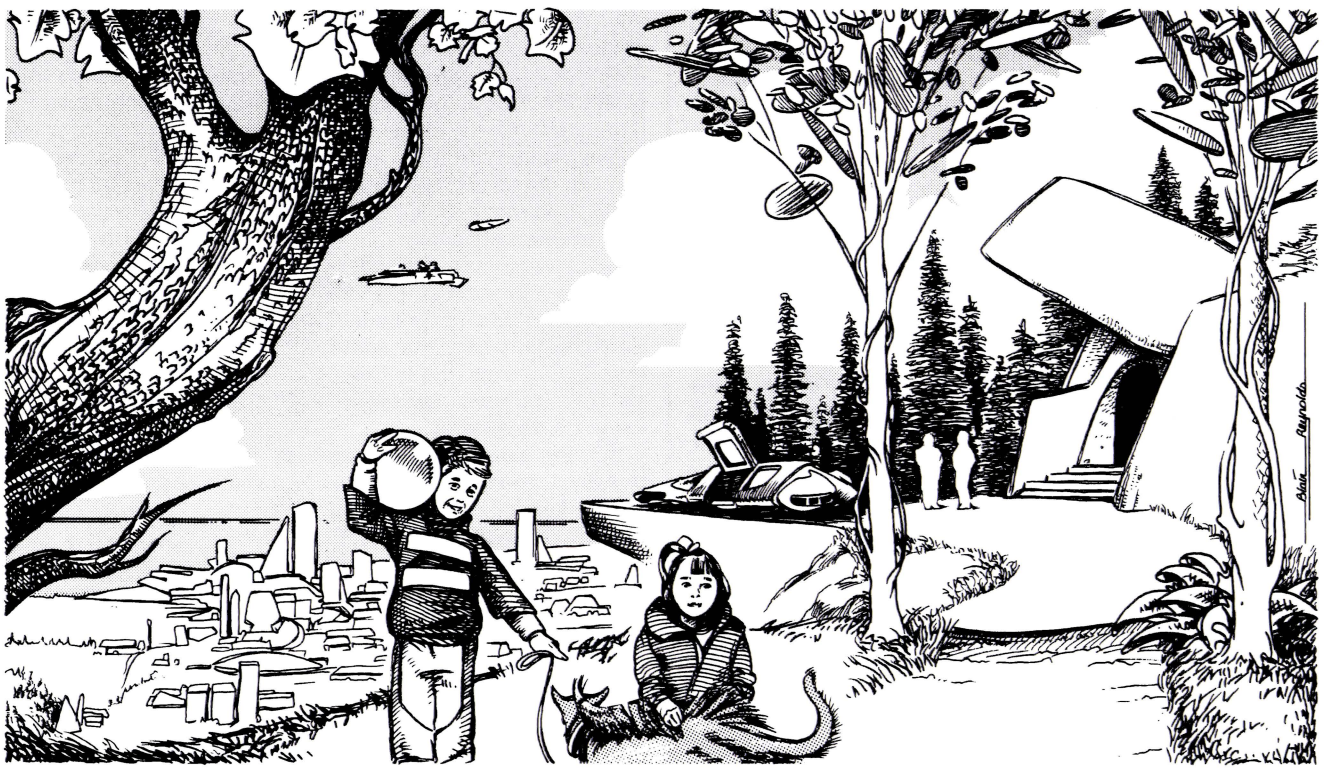
**Action:** At this point, the PCs will probably repeat their tale and request, asking for file access to attempt to uncover more information on the dalev-thur.

When Ogniir finds out what they need access to the files for, his manner will become cool. He tells the PCs that he is not in favor of the government's recent change of heart regarding protection of the Patterned Desert's secrets. "I understand the quest for scientific understanding is important — critical, in my field, really.", he begins. "But, I don't think it's right meddling with the lines. They could be linked to matters greater than we understand."

Ogniir then goes on to describe the theory of how the lines are an attempt to communicate with supernatural deities beyond our understanding. He seems passionate about his views and eloquently states them. It's hard not to give some credence to his viewpoint.

Once he states his mind, he will hand the PCs electronic clipboards and ask them to fill out the forms contained on them. He will then excuse himself to make a phone call or two to check on some things pertaining to the PCs' request. He then taps a switch on his desk. Suddenly, Ogniir and his desk will disappear in a holographic cone of shifting, opaque color. Though the PCs know that Ogniir is sitting only meters away and is likely talking on his comm unit, they cannot hear his voice — only a soft, hypnotic musical tone. Ogniir will have put the PCs on hold.

After about five minutes, the spectral cone vanishes. Ogniir's expression will be impossible to read. He then stands and ushers the PCs down a hall and into a data retrieval room filled with a number of library access stations. "If you need me, I'll be in my office.", Ogniir states. He then leaves them to their data hunt.



Ogniir's cold reaction to the PCs is simply a result of his personal views. He is not malicious and does not have any cruel, underhanded plans he is waiting to launch on the unsuspecting PCs. He is a native of Wardn. The mystical elements of the Wardn lines are part of the planetary lore. It is an enigma the people are proud of and respect. Though Ogniir is aware of more scientific facts about the desert's mysteries than most, his attitude is fairly typical of the Wardn natives.

There are no complex tricks to accessing the data files. Most of the official records state that the lines are the result of an anaerobic organism which carves out shallow channels during its yearly migration. A few documents maintain that these geometric patterns are the results of some ancient civilization which died out long before man ever colonized Wardn. Only

one document exists specifically referring to the dalev-thur. That is an ordinance which makes it illegal to hunt, kill, trap, or otherwise harass the creatures.

As the characters search through the official records have them make a check on the following task to see what information they uncover.

To find information on the Lines in the official records:
Routine, Admin, Int, 5 min, (Unskilled OK, Safe)
*Referee:* A mishap on this task will merely result in the characters finding false information. For every successful test, roll 1D and consult the table below.

**1.** In the transcript of a hearing concerning mining in the Patterned Desert, the characters find references to the lines as an artifact of unknown importance. The outcome of the hearing is that no exploitation of the area will be permitted until the importance of the lines is fully understood.

**2.** In an old tourism pamphlet, the Patterned Desert is mentioned as a must for sightseers due to the unusual geometric markings left behind by a long-dead race. This pamphlet speculates that the Lines were this race's attempts to communicate with the gods.

**3.** A recent report filed by a planetologist suggests that changes in the depth, size, length, and intricacy of the lines can be related to the occurrence of solar flares. The report goes on to speculate that perhaps the organisms that make the lines are adversely affected by the radiation released by the flares, accounting for the variations in the lines.

**4.** Geological surveys of the Patterned Desert state that no trace of any caverns, tunnels or any other such subterranean feature can be found beneath the Desert floor. The same surveys revealed the presence of large deposits of gold, copper, and lead in the Desert's substrata.

**5.** Within a recent hardcopy file is a copy of a permit, signed by Ogniir, granting Dr. Vzan DunLinn permission to conduct research in the Patterned Desert. The stated purpose of this research is to determine the origins of the lines.

**6.** In a computer file of law enforcement documents is a report by a ranger who was sent out to the Patterned Desert to investigate reports by an aerial survey crew that someone had been hunting the dalev-thur. The officer found no evidence to support the claim. He did find a couple of kids who claimed to be hunting desert pigs. The youngsters were cited for hunting in a protected area, and the incident was forgotten.

### 3. ABOUT TOWN

**The PCs roam town to prepare for their expedition and to pick up rumors.**

**Location: In and around the city.**

**Scene:** Though Strellin is the largest city on-planet, it still has a rural feel. Plant life can be seen everywhere in the city. The flora is toned in rich purple to burgundy hues. Most of the plants are short and thick-leaved.

Two large hills rise up from the edge of town. One houses con-apts of the town's well-to-do, the other is unsettled and sprouts the Gervaan-Zseet University from its base. Both hills are amply adorned in plum-colored splendor.

Many of the houses in Strellin, as on much of Wardn, are underground, for an added measure of radiation protection. Most of the structures you can see above ground tend to be low and thick-walled.

Strellin is primarily a "student town", with almost half of its population either attending the university or visiting the city as tourists. Cultural diversions abound. Unique melodies and enticing smells from various clubs and cafes waft down many avenues. Every so often, a grav bus full of tourists heading for a glimpse of the Patterned Desert can be seen lifting over the city. Off-shore, Wardn downport rests on a small island. Air traffic to and from the starport is virtually non-existent, with most people using instead the subterranean shuttle network connecting it to Strellin.

**Action:** Another option for the PCs obtaining information is to ask about town, possibly as they gather materials for their expedition. The temperature in Wardn's equatorial zones is usually cool — ranging from 8 to 18 C. Wardn has a reputation for treating off-worlders very well, and the planet's friendly inhabitants cloak themselves in heavy clothing to protect themselves from the cool temperatures and the damaging radiation from the planet's sun.

A common native animal in the city is a *roap*. These are best described as furred snakes which twist in and around the branches of Strellin's short trees. Roaps are primarily plant-eaters and have a playful nature.

Asking around the town about the desert, or about the dalev-thur, will produce a wide range of results. Use the task profile presented below to determine what the characters are able to find out in the form of rumors and hearsay.

To gather information through rumors and hearsay:
Routine, Streetwise, Int, 3 min, (Unskilled OK, Uncertain)
*Referee:* If a character fails at this task, the individual to whom he is speaking knows nothing about the Patterned Desert or the phenomenon to be found there. If a mishap occurs the individual being questioned will give the character false information. If this task succeeds, roll 1D and consult the table below.

**1.** The bartender in a starport tavern (Age 34 576845) has been to the Patterned Desert. He says that while the lines are interesting, they're nothing spectacular, even from the air.

**2.** An local militiaman (Age 39 677984) says that he was part of the detachment sent to extract the first research team that was investigating the dalev-thur. He doesn't know what those people got into out there in the desert, but their symptoms seemed to mimic those of tetanus.

**3.** A hunter (Age 56 778677) says that he could make a fortune if the government would open up the Patterned Desert to hunting. He has already had a few covert offers from wealthy citizens for him to lead hunting parties in search of the dalev-thur. A lot of people think that the creatures are mythical, rather like Bigfoot on Terra, and his rich clients all want to be the first to kill one. He always turned them down though, since the area is restricted and has been heavily patrolled.

**4.** A local merchant (Age 32 678673) tells you an unusual tale. When he was young, he and his father were taking one of the tours over the Patterned Desert. It was early morning and the ground was still enshrouded in a fog. As the fog lifted, the lines became visible, but he could swear they were moving — changing their character as he watched. Since then, he has shared his father's conviction that the Wardn lines are a method of communicating with supernatural deities.

**5.** A scientist (Age 53 565AB8) who claims to be working for the Scout Service says that Wardn's sun has been experiencing an odd series of solar flares recently. He has heard the theory that the flares affect the Wardn Lines, and will be interested to see how they will change considering the recent intensity.

**6.** The pilot of a commercial transport shuttle (Age 27 7A8787) says that he was one of the pilots who took Dr. DunLinn's research team out to the Patterned Desert about a month and a half ago. The doctor was really anxious to get to the desert before the dalev-thur began their yearly migration.

The pilot says that he really doesn't believe in the creatures' intelligence, but if some crackpot scientist wants to throw his credits away trying to read the lines as language, he might as well throw some his way. If asked, the pilot can show the characters on a map where he landed Dr. DunLinn's party.

## SCENARIO 3: THE PATTERNED DESERT

### SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

**1. Overflight:** In this nugget the characters fly to the Patterned Desert and make an aerial survey of the lines.

**2. On the Ground:** When the characters land and begin their survey of the desert, use this nugget. This nugget contains information on the Wardn Lines.

**3. Dunlinn's Camp:** This nugget covers Dr. Vzan DunLinn's camp and what the party finds there. Contained in this nugget is information concerning the plague, how it spreads, how it is treated and how it may be arrested.

**4. The Dalev-Thur:** This nugget covers the party's search for the dalev-thur. Information on the creature itself and its relationship to the plague and the Wardn Lines is contained in this section.

Once the characters have completed their research at Strellin, they should be encouraged to go to the Patterned Desert as soon as possible. If they have their own transportation, such as an air/raft, launch, or gig, fine. Otherwise, they will find it necessary to make arrangements to either rent some kind of vehicle, or charter both a vehicle and pilot. They also need to finalize the "paperwork" for their permit to explore the Patterned Desert. Lack of such a document could result in arrest if the party encounters planetary authorities in the area.

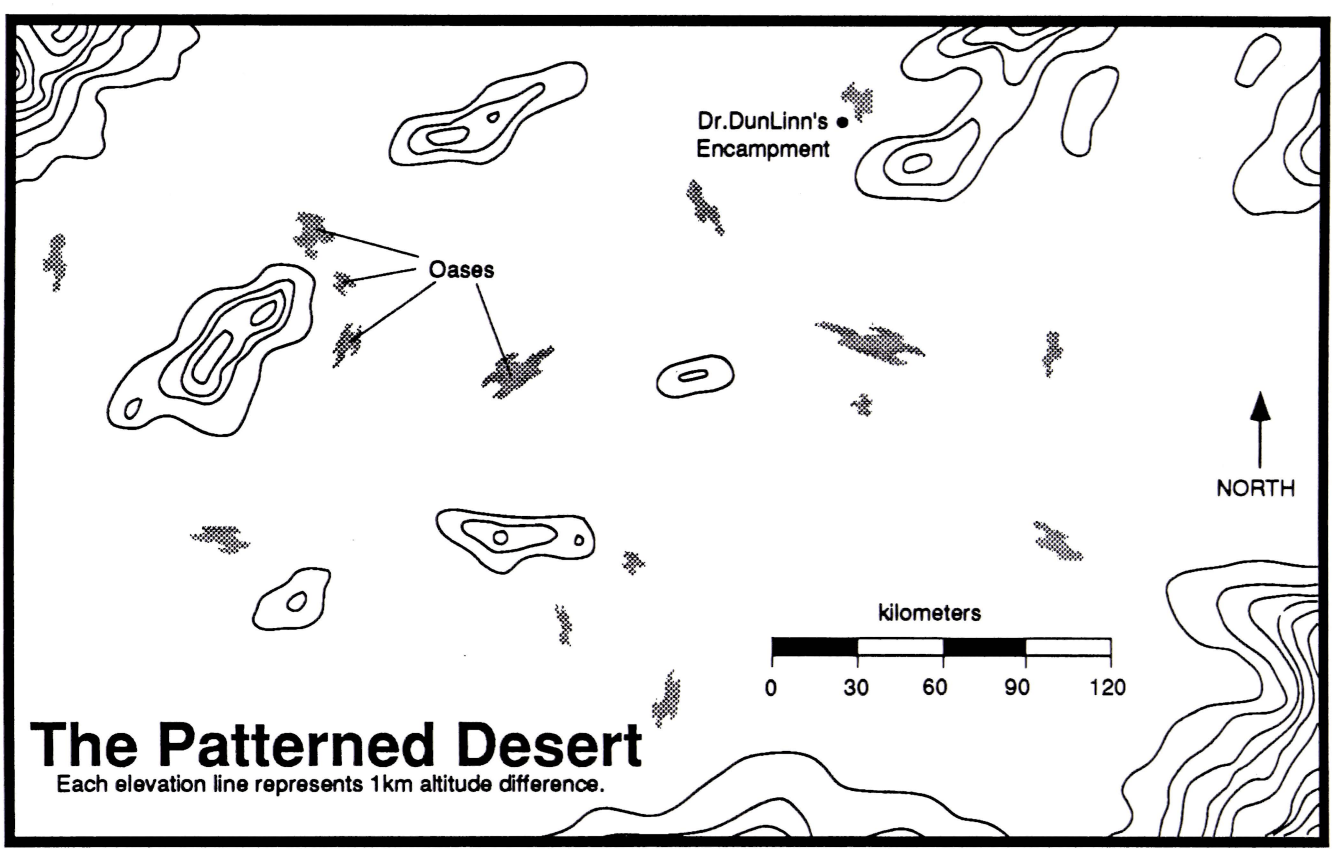
### 1. OVERFLIGHT

**The PCs make the aerial journey to the Patterned Desert.**
**Location: On an air raft between Strellin and the desert.**

**Scene:** The trip from Strellin to the Patterned Desert is remarkably uneventful. As you head north, the amount of vegetation begins to decrease and change. Wardn's thin atmosphere allows you to see the stars from your vehicle, even in full daylight. Unfortunately, the thinness of the atmosphere also makes it necessary that you either wear respirator masks or travel in a vehicle with a closed cockpit if you fly any higher than 3000 meters.

On the horizon, a curious mountain appears. It seems to be ringed in a snowy wreath, but its summit (the upper third of the mountain) is without snow. After a few minutes consideration, it is obvious that the appearance of the mountain is due to the fact that its summit rises above Wardn's thin veil of atmosphere. The summit is beyond the touch of Wardn's atmosphere.

As your craft clears the mountains surrounding the Patterned Desert, the full effect of the Wardn Lines hits you like a runaway grav-sled. Hundreds upon hundreds of lines stretch out as far as the eye can see. Some run almost laser beam straight for hundreds of kilometers. Others meander across the plain like the braid on a rich Vilani's cloak. Regardless of their form, all of the Lines seem to follow a north-south orientation. From the air, some of the Lines are sharp edged and distinct, dark brown against the sun-bleached sand of the desert. Others are less clear, as though time and the elements are erasing their edges.



Until this exact moment. you had not realized the enormity of the task before you.

With a slight twitch of the controls, the pilot swings your vehicle around for a long pass across the Patterned Desert. Below, the strange markings of the Wardn Lines stretch for kilometers across the dark sands. In spite of all the strange things you've seen in your travels, the incredibly complex patterns laid out on the desert floor below you are an amazingly awesome sight.

**Action:** As the characters make their aerial survey of the Wardn Lines, have them roll against the task profile listed below to determine what they are able to discover about the Wardn Lines.

To make an aerial survey of the Wardn Lines:
Routine, Recon, Int, 20 min, (Unskilled OK)

*Referee:* If the party is successful in their survey, they will notice that the more distinct the lines are the ones that form the most complex patterns, while the straightest lines are indistinct almost to the point of vanishing.

A second success will reveal that the lines seem to wander from one clump of desert vegetation to another.

**2. ON THE GROUND**

**The PCs land to examine the Wardn lines first-hand.**
**Location: At a random desert location.**

**Scene:** After spending some time circling over the Patterned Desert, you finally pick a landing site and set down. It is colder here than in the equatorial regions. The temperature is hovering around freezing. From the floor of the desert the lines lose much of their impressive scope. Indeed, all but the most distinct of the lines can hardly be seen at all.

After securing the ship, your team spreads out to get a closer look at the phenomenon known as the Wardn Lines. Scattered about on the ground are what appears to be some manner of desert plant, looking like coral tubes.

**Action:** The "coral tubes" are plants which extend half-meter-long fronts in the evening. As the party searches for clues as to the nature and origins of the Lines use the following task profile to determine how successful they are.

To obtain clues as to the nature of the Wardn Lines by examining them:
Difficult, Recon, Int, 20 min, (Unskilled OK, Uncertain)

*Referee:* If the characters are successful at the above tasks, they are able to determine that the lines are actually shallow grooves in the coarse sand of the desert floor. The more distinct lines are newer than those that are more difficult to see. What makes the lines more or less distinct is the fact that the gouges in the desert floor are just deep enough to reveal a darker-colored substrata. The edges of the newer lines seem to be coated with some sort of binding substance which breaks down over time. This allows the natural forces of erosion and sedimentation to fill in the grooves, thereby making the lines less distinct.

To determine why the lines follow such a winding course:
Difficult, Biology, Int, 30 min, (Unskilled OK, Uncertain)

*Referee:* If the characters have a "sniffer" type bio-scanner, or a similar type expert system allow a +2 DM on this task. A hand computer programmed for biological analysis will allow a +1 DM.

If the party is successful at this task they will be able to determine that the lines wander from one clump of desert vegetation to another.

If the party has a "sniffer" type bio-scanner, have them roll on the following task profile.

To interpret the information presented by the bio-scanner correctly:
Routine, Biology, Int, 30 sec, (Unskilled OK, Hazardous)

*Referee:* Do not tell the players why they are being asked to roll the dice on this task unless they succeed. The Wardn Lines are made by the dalev-thur as they migrate across the Patterned Desert. (See Nugget 4 for details on the dalev-thur) If the party is examining the most distinct, and therefore most recent lines, they run the risk of becoming infected with the plague being spread by the creatures.

If the party passes the task listed above, they will be able to detect the presence of the infectious organisms in time to take the proper precautions. If they fail the task roll, they run the risk of becoming infected with the plague.

For every ten minutes an unprotected character spends within twenty meters of the most recent lines, have him roll on the following task profile.

To avoid being infected
Routine, Str, End, Instant, (Fateful, Uncertain)

*Referee:* Do not tell the player why he is rolling the dice unless the party has already discovered the presence of the pathogenic organisms. If the character fails this task, the degree of mishap will determine the degree of infection. See Issue #20 of the *Travellers' Digest* for suggestions on how to referee the course and treatment of a disease. (See Nugget 3 for details on the plague).

**3. DUNLINN'S CAMP**

**(The PCs locate and land at Dr. Dunlinn's camp)**

**Scene:** As night draws near, you finally locate Dr. Dun-Linn's camp. A group of tents is huddled together around a place where several Lines cross. In the center of this cluster

stands a large tent made of dark-green canvas. Next to that shelter stands what appears to be a military surplus generator. The nightly fog which engulfs the desert is beginning to settle in. The desert's nocturnal denizens are starting their eerie chants.

As you approach the camp, no one answers your hails, either by radio or by voice. Even in so remote a spot as this, it is unusual for a party to leave their camp without posting someone to guard it.

**Action:**As the party looks around the campsite, they will be able to pick out more details. The generator is not running, and an air/raft is grounded near one of the tents. Its maintenance cowlings have been removed, and tools are scattered around the area, but there is no sign of a mechanic.

Upon closer investigation the party will discover the reason for these anomalies. The entire research team has been overcome by some type of disease.

Out of fifteen researchers and support personnel, all but three are dead. The surviving members of the team are Dr. DunLinn himself, a junior xenobiologist, and the camp cook. Of the survivors, only the cook is still conscious, but he is so far gone that he is barely able to speak. If the party tries to question him, use the task below to determine what they are able to get out of the man.

To question the cook:
Difficult, Interview, Int, 10 min, (Unskilled OK, Hazardous)
*Referee:* While the man is not unconscious, he is in a bad way. If the questioning results in a major mishap, he lapses into a coma before he can tell them anything. If a destroyed mishap occurs, the cook dies. If the party is successful in questioning the man, he will be able to tell them that Dr. DunLinn and his team were on the verge of some significant breakthroughs when one of the biologists attached to his team became ill.

They tried to treat the woman with antibiotics, but the medications had no effect. The patient went into convulsions and died. Not long after that the entire party fell ill. Dr. DunLinn tried to treat the sickness with a variety of medications but none had any effect. Within eight hours of the onset of the disease, the entire party was incapacitated.

If the player characters took no precautions against becoming infected, have each party member roll against the following task to determine if he or she has become infected.

To avoid being infected with the plague:
Difficult, Str, End, Instant, (Fateful, Uncertain)
*Referee:* Unprotected characters should roll against this task every turn they are in physical contact with a character who is infected with the plague. This also applies to unprotected characters who examine or handle the bodies of those who have died of the plague. A simple filter mask will prevent a character from becoming infected.

Assuming the cook survives being questioned, he, Dr. DunLinn, and the xenobiologist can be saved if they are placed in some form of suspended animation within two hours.

The plague is the result of contact with the anaerobic organisms which make up the dalev-thur (See Nugget 4). The plague is similar to tetanus in its symptoms. The victim is infected by inhaling the organisms, which then pass quickly out of the lungs and lodge in muscular tissues, including the heart, where they begin to replicate. After an incubation period of 3 to 6 hours the victim's condition begins to deteriorate rapidly. Symptoms of this plague are fatigue, muscle cramps, muscle spasms, convulsions, and death due to cardiac arrest.

The administration of pure oxygen slows the disease by 1 to 6 hours, but will not stop it. There is no antibiotic which is totally effective against this disease. Broad-spectrum antibiotics stand a remote chance of having some effect. Roll 2D: 2=the antibiotic cured the illness; 3,4= the disease is slowed by 1-2 hours; 5 to 12= no effect.

If an individual can be gotten to a world with a medical tech level of 12 or higher, a retrovirus can be produced which will kill the disease within 12 hours. See Scenario 4 for details on how to arrest the disease entirely.

If the party searches the camp looking for clues as to what Dr. DunLinn was working on when he fell ill, use the following task to determine the outcome of the search.

To search the campsite:
Routine, Recon, Int, 20 min, (Unskilled OK)
*Referee:* Have each party member tell you exactly where he is searching, and have him attempt the specified task for each area searched.

Dr. DunLinn's research notes may be found in the central laboratory tent. They are contained in a computer file labeled "Wardn Lines". If these notes are discovered, and reviewed, the party will find that the doctor had concluded that the dalev-thur are indeed responsible for the creation of the Wardn Lines. Dr. DunLinn's notes also state that he asked the team's senior xenobiologist to begin an examination of the creatures, hoping to determine the nature of the beasts. It was shortly after the biologist began examining the dalev-thur that the man fell ill.

The xenobiologist's preliminary report may be found on a desk in the lab tent. According to his findings, the dalev-thur are not single multi-celled organisms, but rather large colonies of individual diatom-sized anaerobic organisms. The report also states that the basic structure of the creatures seems to have changed over the past few years. The biologist had no solid proof, but he suspected that the organisms were mutating as a result of exposure to the radiation released by the recent series of solar flares.

The report goes on to state that the scientist intended to attempt to capture one of the colonies, but there is no evidence to indicate that such an attempt was ever made. The biologist was infected through close contact with the organism before he was able to carry out his plan.

**4. THE DALEV-THUR**
**(The PCs try to capture a dalev-thur and figure out the puzzle behind the disease)**

**Scene:** Intending to carry out an examination of the dalev-thur, you settle down to plan exactly how you want to go about it. The government agreement which has allowed you to undertake this expedition specifically forbids you to kill any of the dalev-thur.

From all that you've seen and heard of the organisms, they don't tend to stay in one spot for very long, thus making a close examination of the creature difficult at best. Still, you've worked your way through tougher spots, and you aren't about to let an animal that looks like a leather-covered rockpile stop you now.

**Action:** Have the players tell you exactly how they plan to capture a dalev-thur. Since the creatures are actually a colonial organism, any attempt to kill one through violent means, such as a shotgun blast, will cause a degree of local dispersal of the creature equal to the violence applied. Thus a

shotgun blast will disperse about one third of an average-size dalev-thur.

In addition, any attack which causes more than a 25% dispersal of the creature will kill it through oxygen poisoning. A net or other similar contrivance will be sufficient to capture any dalev-thur larger than the openings in the net. In most cases the following task should suffice for an attempt by your players to capture a dalev-thur.

To capture a dalev-thur:
Difficult, Hunting, Int, 30 min, (Unskilled OK)
*Referee:* The time indicated is intended to represent both the setting of a trap, and the time it takes to actually capture the dalev-thur. This task implies a non-violent means of capture, such as a net or box-trap. If a violent means of capture, such as a gunshot, is employed, the creature may be partially dispersed in the attempt if the method used breaches its exoskeleton. Remember that a dalev-thur which suffers more than a 25% dispersal will die.

Once a dalev-thur is captured, the characters may carry out their examination of the creature. The task profile below should be used to determine how successful the party is in their examination attempt.

To examine the dalev-thur:
Difficult, Biology, Int, 30 min, (Hazardous)
*Referee:* If the character(s) examining the creature have access to an expert system, such as a biological computer, allow a +1 DM to the task. The task is hazardous due to the danger of becoming infected by the anaerobic organisms which make up the dalev-thur. See Nugget 3 for details on the chances of becoming infected.

The dalev-thur are colonial organisms, each being made up of hundreds of thousands of diatom-sized anaerobic organisms. During the short winter months, these colonies separate into their component organisms. In the spring, the organisms band together, according to some as yet undiscovered genetic code and become what has been called the dalev-thur. At that point, the organisms on the outer surfaces of the mass die, forming a thick, leathery exoskeleton. This exoskeleton protects the remaining organisms from the poisonous effects of oxygen.

During the spring and summer, the dalev-thur roams around the desert, in search of sustenance. In the process of grazing through the desert sand looking for small insects, dead vegetable matter and the like, the dalev-thur scours a wide shallow groove in the desert floor. This scouring action reveals the darker colored strata beneath the lighter surface sand, thus creating the phenomenon known as the Wardn Lines. The edges of the lines are reinforced by the waste products secreted by the dalev-thur in the form of a thin slime trail which quickly hardens into a cement-like substance, thereby binding the sand into a solid mass. As time passes, this cement is broken down by the elements, and the lines begin to fade until they disappear entirely.

Originally, the dalev-thur were harmless grazers. Due in part to the recent increase in intensity of solar flares, their basic cell structure has begun to mutate. The radiation from the flares has altered the genetic code of the individual anaerobes to the point where they now act upon the human body in a manner similar to tetanus. (See Nugget 3 for details on this disease.)

## SCENARIO 4: STOPPING THE PLAGUE

### SUMMARY OF NUGGETS

**1. Analyzing The Problem:** In this nugget, the party, along with local experts if they desire, analyze the data they have to date, searching for a way to avert a devastating plague.
**2. A Disaster Averted:** Use this nugget if the party managed to come up with a solution which stopped the plague.
**3. The Wardn Plague:** If the characters were unable, or unwilling to find a solution to the problem facing Wardn, use this nugget.

### 1. ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

**(The PCs try to figure out a method for preventing the plague)**

**Scene:** Well, there it is, staring you in the face. When the dalev-thur reach the end of their colonial phase at the end of the summer, they will disperse into millions of anaerobic organisms that will likely spread a deadly plague across the planet. Desperately, you begin to wrack your brains for a way of averting such a disaster.

**Action:** If the player characters decide to make an attempt to stop the plague, allow them to consult any medical and biological experts they are able to locate on Wardn. Such persons are easy to locate back in Strellin. Use the following task to represent this.

To locate biology and medical experts:
Simple, Admin, Int, 15 min, (Unskilled OK, Safe)
*Referee:* The characters will be able to find three such individuals in Strellin. See the NPCs section at the start of this adventure for their statistics.

Working together, the party and any outside consultants should be able to come up with a solution to the problem. The simplest solution is to develop some sort of chemical spray which will break down the dalev-thur's exoskeleton without dispersing the individual anaerobes. This will expose the organisms inside, to the oxygen of the atmosphere, which is a deadly poison to most anaerobic organisms. Several chemical poisons of this type exist already in the form of agricultural insecticides.

As your players discuss what to do, you must design tasks appropriate to the situation. In most cases, the task will involve testing various methods of destroying the dalev-thur without dispersing them.

If the party has contacted local experts, use these NPCs to remind the players that violent means, such as gunfire, nuclear devices, and the like will disperse the anaerobes. If even a few survive, there is a chance that Wardn will face a similar situation in the future, one which may not be discovered until it is too late.

If the planetary government is consulted, they will initially be adamantly against any action that would harm the dalev-thur. Their extermination could deal a tremendous blow to the local and planetary economy. Use the following task to represent the parties attempts to convince the government.

To persuade the government to take action:
Difficult, Admin, Int, 2 hours, (Uncertain)
*Referee:* If the characters are able to demonstrate to the government that the dalev-thur are indeed a bigger threat to Wardn's society than the economic impact of their demise, they will be granted permission to act and will be given access to governmental resources. If the characters can propose a plan to preserve the lines, this may help expedite the discussions. Regardless, the whole process will not be easy. Convincing the government to take action will be like pulling teeth.

**2. A DISASTER AVERTED**
**(Use this nugget if the PCs prevent the plague from spreading)**

**Scene:** Gradually, reports have been filtering back that the dalev-thur are dying. It is truly a shame that the creatures had to be destroyed in order to prevent a devastating plague, but it was necessary. Once the last monitoring station reports in, the long process of searching the desert for any surviving dalev-thur must begin. If even one of the colonies survived, Wardn might have to go through this all over again.

**Action:** Once the solution to the plague has been developed, the planetary government will take swift action, and the operation will be carried out. Once the dalev-thur have been wiped out, the party may be asked to stay on-planet until the government is certain that the crisis is over.

**3. THE WARDN PLAGUE**
**(Use this nugget if the PCs do nothing with their information and allow the plague to spread)**

**Scene:** For once the newsfaxes seem to have forgotten the Rebellion. Every information source from the official government down to local gossip is full of stories about the devastating plague which killed nearly half the population of Wardn before it was brought under control. Though the human population wasn't completely exterminated, some native species, such as the roaps, completely died out.

It seems that a colonial creature called the dalev-thur was spreading some kind of anaerobe through the atmosphere. All it took to kill them was a simple poison which dissolved their exoskeletons, and the creatures died of oxygen poisoning.

**Action:** No action is really necessary at this point. If you are running this adventure as part of an ongoing campaign, the characters will have to be careful about who knows that they were on Wardn, and were unable to stop the plague. Such things are bad for one's reputation.


# Digest Group Has Moved!

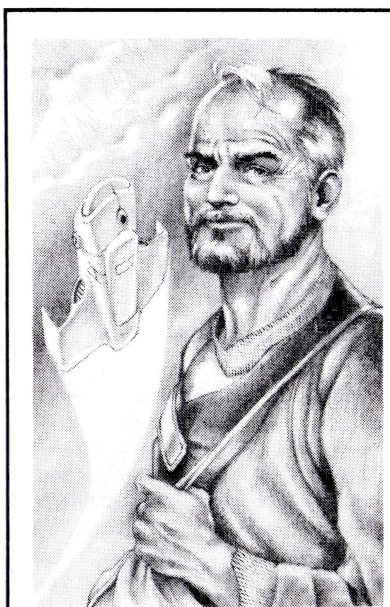
**Our new address is:**
**Digest Group Publications**
**515 Willow**
**Woodburn, Oregon 97071**
**Phone: (503) 981-4752**



# "In these troubled times, it's good to know you've got a friend."

No other organization can meet the demands of the interstellar traveller like the Travellers' Aid Society. For over 400 years, TAS has been that needed friend on new worlds.
Those who qualify for TAS' exclusive membership have found an open door to affordable, essential services on most civilized worlds.

TAS™



Jeramii Boden,
TAS spokesman and noted interstellar traveller

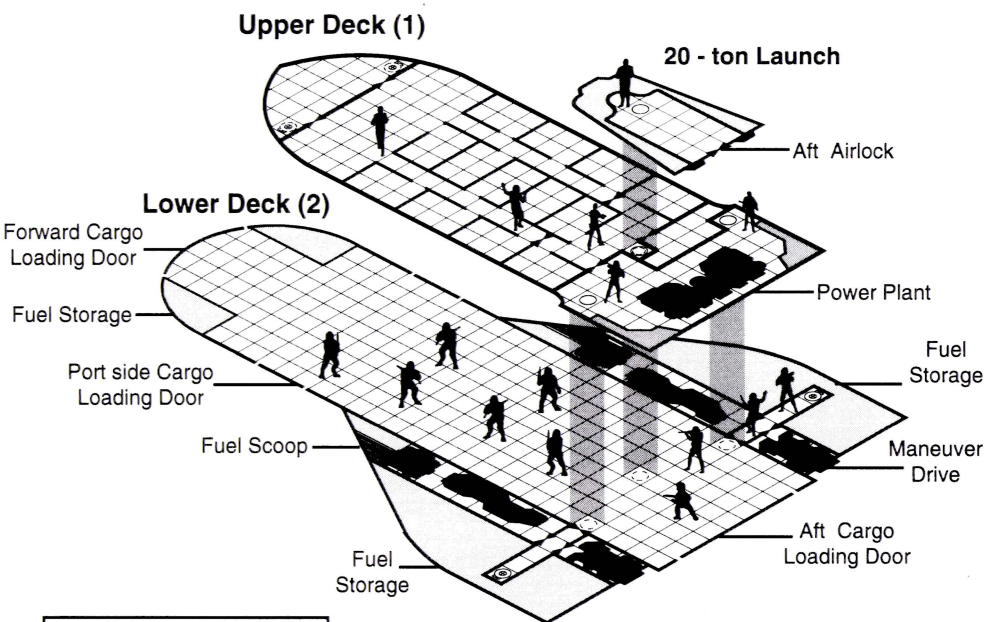
TAS' exclusive lifetime membership provides:

» Reduced, affordable rates at our First Class TAS hostels for members and their guests.
» One gratis high passage ticket every eight weeks, enabling our members to wind their way among the stars – in style.
» Free access to the *Travellers' News Service* ® information net, keeping you in touch with the ebb and flow of interstellar events.
» Reasonably-priced members-only local tours, helping you to experience the world to its fullest.
» Free legal councel on all worlds housing a TAS facility.
» Full medical coverage and insurance covering your travelling possessions.

*For more information or to see if you qualify for a TAS membership, seek out the TAS facility at your nearest A or B class starport, or contact us via TAS.FRIEND on your local net.*

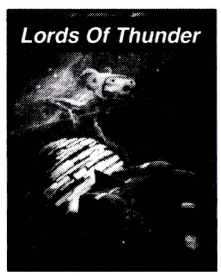
# MEGATRAVELLER™

## Add an *Exciting New Dimension* to your Gaming Adventures with Detailed Starship Deck plans



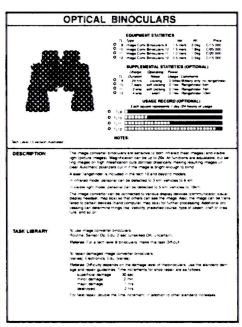

**400 - ton Subsidized Merchant 20 - ton Launch**

***A New Adventure For 1991***




*The Storm is Brewing in the Gateway Sector . . .*

***Consumer Guide Volume. I***

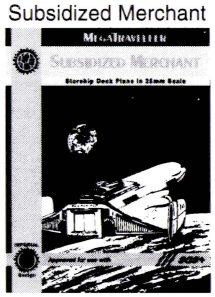



**#1080** - 48 New pieces of equipment, ranging from the essential to the exotic. Each item fully illustrated and profiled. 54 pages. $10.00

Laboratory Ship

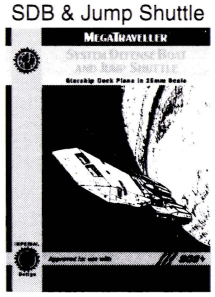
**#1021** - $11.95

Subsidized Merchant



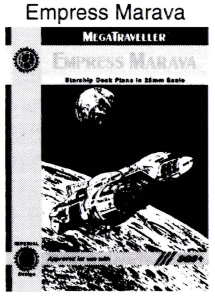

**#1019** - $11.95

SDB & Jump Shuttle



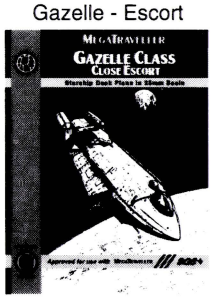

**#1016** - $11.95

Empress Marava




**#1017** - $11.95

Gazelle - Escort




**#1015** - $11.95

***All Deck plans are in 25mm scale***

MasterCard VISA

Ask your local dealer for these products or order direct.
P/H $2.50 for U.S./Canada.
Overseas $5 U.S.
Send for your **FREE** catalog today.

SGS

**SEEKER GAMING SYSTEMS**
**P.O. Box 519**
**Mtn. Home, ID. 83647-0519**
**Voice/FAX Line (208) 587-2986**

# A Concise History Of The Rebellion

**MEGATRAVELLER EVENTS 1116 – 1120:** *Transcribed from Galanglic by Clayton R. Bush*

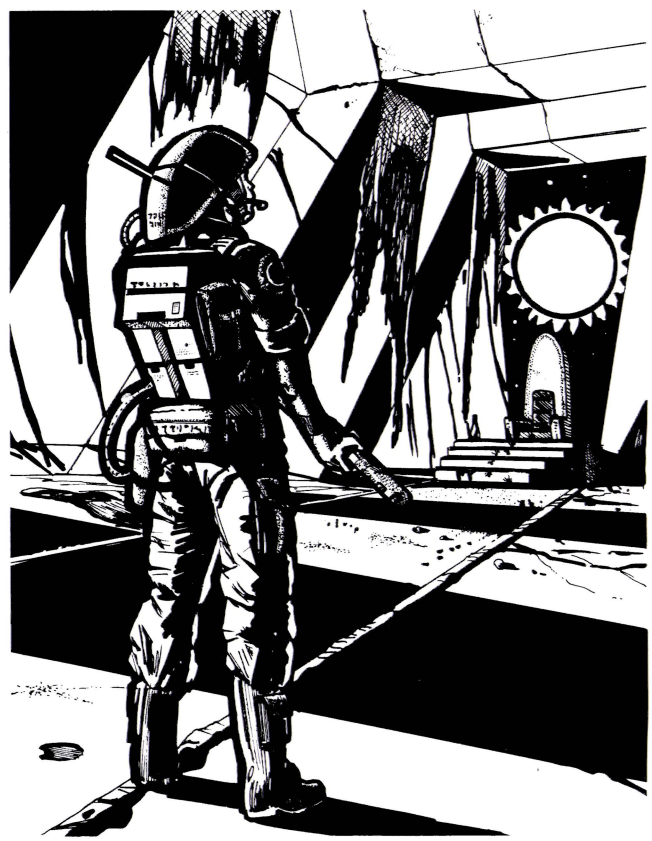
[This synopsis of Baroness Sessoi's *History of the Rebellion 1116-1120*, is the first volume of her proposed trilogy. Others are planned to appear as Deneb's leading historian finishes her subsequent volumes.]

**THE THIRD IMPERIUM**

Ending the fifteen-hundred-year period of interstellar anarchy known as the Long Night, the Third Imperium rose from the chaos as civilization's champion. In the Imperial year 1116, the Third Imperium under Emperor Strephon Aella Alkhalikoi (Strephon) ruled almost 9,000 inhabited worlds among some 11,000 solar systems. Roughly forty-five hundred high-ranking nobles, under an elite group of dukes and duchesses, served as a manifestation of the Imperium to their worlds. The Imperium included 429 distinct, intelligent races, but as a majority, humans dominated the political power base.

Regardless of this time-tested bureaucratic infrastructure, a single pistol shot plunged the Imperium into a civil war. Many still fear that this event prepared the way for a second Long Night.

In some ways, the Imperium never existed as a government, in the traditional sense. The Imperium primarily asserted its power in the territory *between* its stars. It controlled the major starports and military bases, but each world practiced home rule. These governments were not responsible to the Imperium for their planetary affairs. Thus, the Imperium encompassed divergent ideologies, loyalties, racial backgrounds, and technological prejudices.



Communication between its capital and the worlds on its frontier took months or years. Central control was impossible. The Imperial government had to rely on local nobles to oversee its interests. Honor pervaded Imperial society, because the Imperium's size and scope relied on other responsible parties faithfully fulfilling their local commitments.

The nobility was the glue that held together the Imperium's vast conglomeration of worlds. Positions held by administrators, officers, and citizens received lesser noble titles (knight, baronet and baron) as rewards for supportive actions and behavior. As with its component worlds, the Imperium's upper ranks included a broad spectrum of philosophies and ideologies. Imperial nobility sported a very diverse assortment of individuals.

The highest of nobles was the emperor, then the archdukes, who were responsible for domain-level government. The region of a domain covered several sectors and was the largest Imperial subdivision. For centuries after the First Civil War (circa 604 Imperial, 5122 A.D. Solomani) the archdukes' powers had been limited in scope. Strephon acted to restore full authority to the archdukes to alleviate communication problems between the central government and the far flung frontiers. What was perhaps Strephon's one fatal move was elevating his friend, Dulinor Astrin Ilethian of Dlan (Dulinor), to Archduke of the Domain of Ilelish.

**DULINOR'S COUP**

Dulinor rose to the highest noble rank with Strephon's approval and support. He developed a purpose: to provide the greatest possible benefit for the greatest possible number of Imperial citizens. His method of achieving this goal was to have the Imperium increase its influence on world governments — to force them to follow more democratic, responsive policies.

Frustrated by the nobles' conservatism and the slow pace in implementing Imperial reforms, Dulinor decided to take drastic steps: to ascend to the Imperial throne. The fastest route available to Dulinor was by using the "right of assassination", though its precedent as a means of ascension was buried far in the Imperium's violent past. The right originated in the deposition of an insane Emperor, and had not been used since the Imperial Civil War ended 500 years ago.

As required by succession by right of assassination, Dulinor personally killed Strephon and his immediate family. To Dulinor's misfortune, the Imperial Guard thwarted his plan to remain in the seat of Imperial power. Escaping the world, Capital, Dulinor headed outsystem to his power base in the Domain of Ilelish.

**LUCAN'S ASCENSION**

In the days following the assassination, a search was launched to discover who held the legitimate right to the throne by virtue of bloodline. It was announced that the Emperor's surviving nephew, Prince Lucan Martin III Alkhalikoi (Lucan), was the proper heir.

Many nobles believed Lucan killed Varian, his older brother, in the confusion of Dulinor's coup attempt at the Imperial palace, removing the senior's claim to the throne.

When Lucan would not tolerate a detailed investigation of the circumstances of Varian's death, it became increasingly clear that he was indeed involved in his brother's death. If the rumors were true, the details of Varian's death made Lucan out to be a lying murderer; no better than Dulinor, and to many people worse.

With confusion threatening the peace and order of Capital and potentially the Imperium, influential members of the nobility thought it best to install Lucan on the throne as quickly as possible, regardless of their nagging doubts.

Since his brother was in direct line for the throne, Lucan had never been considered a candidate for the position and wasn't trained for it. Soon, he enunciated what would prove to be his ruling credo: "I don't care what you do. I just want results. If you can't give me results, then get out." After centuries of belief that honor and justice should guide every hand working for the Emperor, the Imperial government and Navy were told that any means were justified if the end was achieved.

On learning Lucan was giving such orders from the throne, noble opposition organized. It was recognized that Lucan would still require approval from the Moot (the Imperial governing assembly of nobles on Capital) before becoming Emperor. Lucan's response was to issue an order dissolving the Moot for one year.

Backing up his order with military force, Lucan stationed Imperial Guard units at the Moot Spire, the Moot's meeting place. Nobles avoided the Moot the next day, and it failed to convene for lack of a quorum. The power of the Moot began to crumble, as many nobles returned to their fiefs. Lucan was left with unilateral control of Capital and the Imperium.

Attitudes play an important role in the collapse of any government. Predictions of a collapse sapped people's will. Psychohistorical analyses, which attempted to predict future events, were dominated by models that forecasted decline. The possible coming of a new Long Night was debated in learned circles. The lack of optimism about the Imperium from influential organizations at its core sped the collapse.

## IDEOLOGICAL SEPARATION

Dulinor reached the worlds of his domain after seven weeks of jumpspace travel. Controlling information, a critical part of Dulinor's plans, enabled him to entrench himself as a ruling Emperor in the Domain of Ilelish before any contradictory news reached the local masses.

Dulinor wasted no time in setting forth on his campaign of reform. His program proposed a gradual transformation of the worlds of the Imperium into liberal democracies. Consistent and liberalized treatment of citizens was appealing and won immediate acceptance.

Late in the year, regions around Ilelish received Lucan's version of the events which transpired in the Imperial core. Regardless of the overwhelming negative picture painted by Lucan's reports, most nobles in Ilelish acquiesced and supported Dulinor rather than resisting his power structure. Beyond the Domain of Ilelish, Dulinor's murder of Strephon crippled his appeal.

With the lines drawn, Dulinor moved to isolate himself from the regions still under the command and ideologies of Lucan. In late 1116, Dulinor became the first secessionist, claiming the region of the Domain of Ilelish to be independent.

## THE FIGHTING BEGINS

Through most of 1116, the news of Strephon's assassination spread from Capital to all parts of the Imperium. Two confrontations shaped events of the following year: Dulinor's insurgence and the Solomani advance.

Although Lucan received widespread initial recognition, his orders and policies soon alienated him from many worlds. Meanwhile, many Imperial officers, troops, and bureaucrats deserted Lucan as they learned what he expected of them. Disruption in the Imperial government left it unable to counter separatist movements. In the wake of Dulinor's claim to an independent Domain of Ilelish, talk of further secession echoed along the Imperial frontiers.

By early 1117, Lucan was well aware of Dulinor's rebellious actions. With the advantages of prior planning and quick reaction times, Dulinor won control of the Domain of Ilelish and was beginning an advance on Capital.

Dulinor's Fleets visited worlds and bases along their advance, "recruiting" local squadrons — unprepared for fighting — for their faction and attacking holdouts. Hostile starports and bases were either occupied or devastated. Naval supply depots, especially, became battlefields.

In his first crucial mistake, Lucan ordered the strongest Imperial frontier fleets to transfer into the core to reinforce the struggle against Dulinor. As the Imperial Navy's Fleet Command had predicted, the front stabilized before the frontier fleets received the orders. Lucan's insistence that they were essential to crush Dulinor ignored the fatal costs of suddenly opening the borders to foreign invasion.

Dulinor's and Lucan's fleets established a battle line about midway between their capitals of systems of Dlan and Capital. Numerous clashes produced tremendous attrition, and they settled in a firm stalemate by mid-year.

Late in the year, Dulinor dispatched several fast fleets into Lucan's territory to disrupt trade and launch strikes on high population worlds supporting Lucan. An extended chase of the raiders diverted many of Lucan's reserves.

This was to become a continuing theme for the Imperium: Lucan vacillated between massing forces and dispersing them to pursue widely-separated objectives.

## THE SOLOMANI GIANT AWAKENS

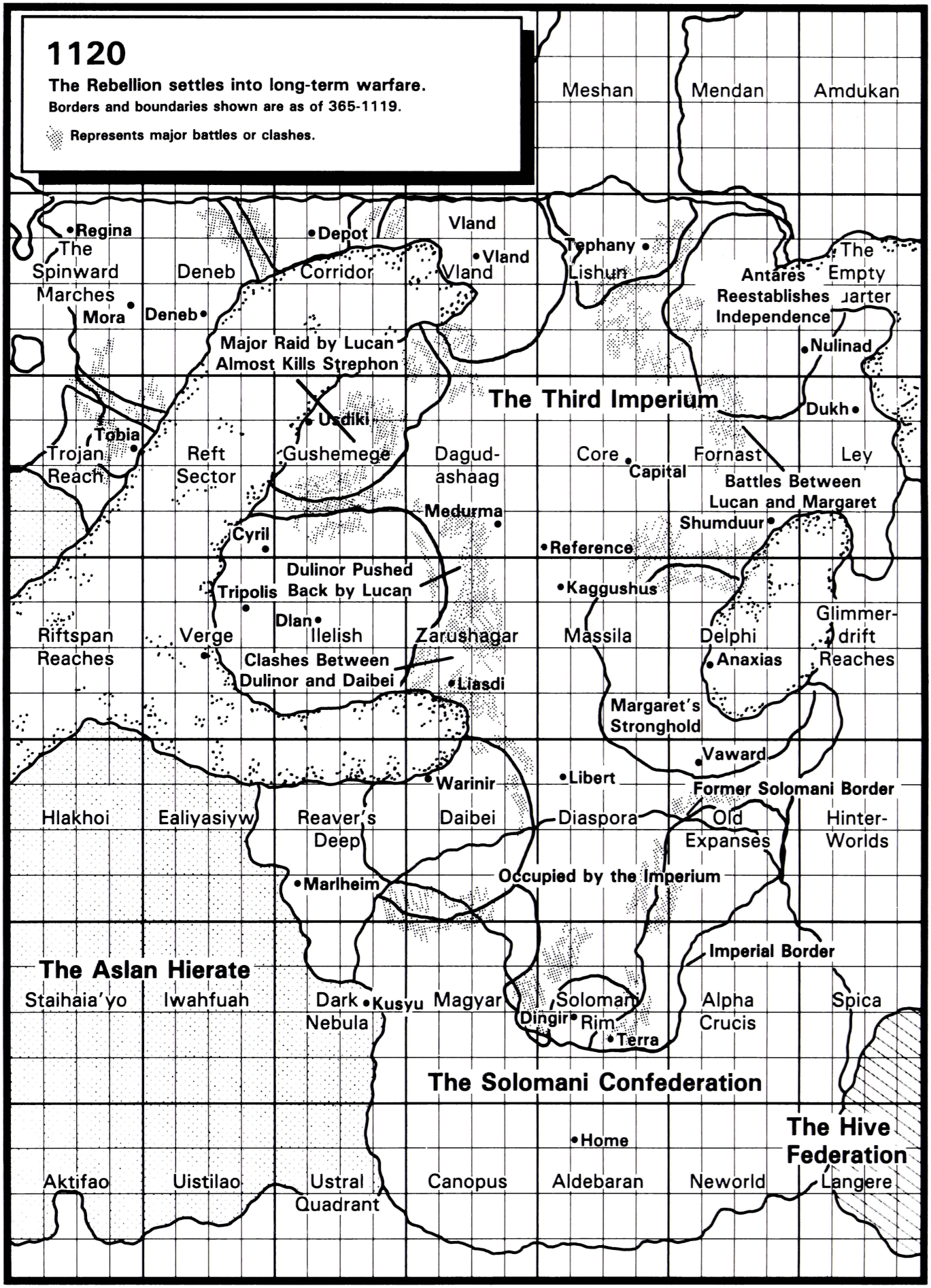
Adjoining the Imperium was the Solomani Confederation, a human-dominated region. The Solomani had seceded from and then been partially reconquered by the Imperium a century before. Advance news of Strephon's assassination reached the Solomani capital world of Home in late 1116. Solomani leaders saw a chance to liberate Imperial-occupied Terra, the Solomani homeworld, and recapture lost territories. Their forces mobilized, opening battles on three fronts with the Imperium.

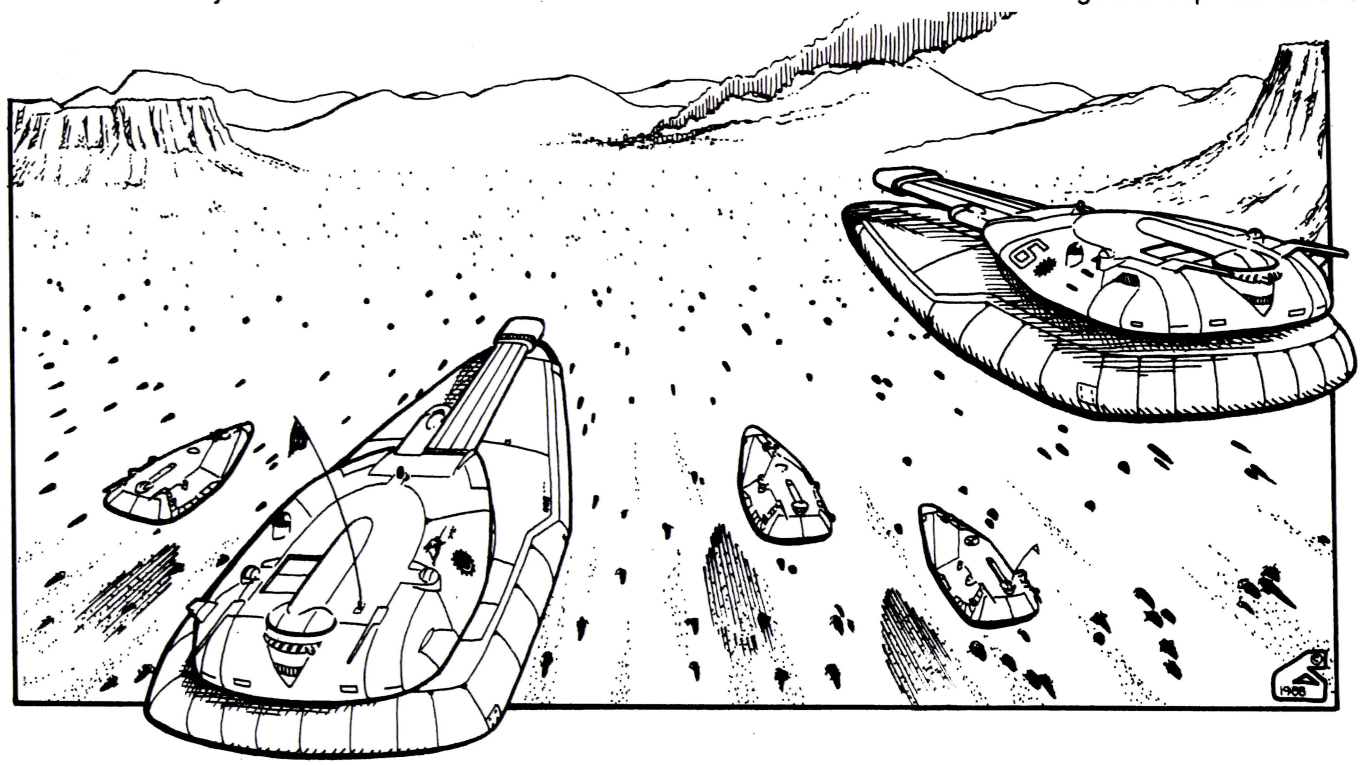
First, their unexpected attacks drove Imperial fleets from Terra, liberating the world. However, retreating Imperial forces concentrated in the nearby Vegan Autonomous District and held a defensive bastion there.

After initial setbacks, Imperial forces battling the advancing Solomani in neighboring Daibei sector also held back the hordes. Behind a leaky shield of frontier forces, the Daibei sector government mobilized reserve and depot fleets. Both sides settled into a war of attrition. Continuing their emphasis on the front around the Vegan Autonomous district, the Solomani allowed the Daibei front to become stagnant.

On the third front, the Old Expanses sector was fighting off Solomani raids when Lucan's transfer order arrived, demanding that naval forces be withdrawn to aid in his struggle against Dulinor's fleets. Responding to Lucan's order, Admiral Hinchcliffe transferred literally every available ship. Naturally, the Old Expanses quickly fell to its knees.

Without means to protect it, the local nobles surrendered the entire sector. Through Lucan's order, the Solomani


1120
The Rebellion settles into long-term warfare.
Borders and boundaries shown are as of 365-1119.
Represents major battles or clashes.
Meshan
Mendan
Amdukan
Regina
Depot
Vland
Vland
Vland
Tephany
Lishun
The Empty Quarter
Antares Reestablishes Independence
The Spinward Marches
Mora
Deneb
Deneb
Corridor
Major Raid by Lucan Almost Kills Strephon
Nulinad
The Third Imperium
Dukh
Usdiki
Tobia
Trojan Reach
Reft Sector
Gushemege
Dagud-ashaag
Core
Capital
Fornast
Ley
Battles Between Lucan and Margaret
Medurma
Shumduur
Cyril
Reference
Dulinor Pushed Back by Lucan
Tripolis
Kaggushus
Dlan
Riftspan Reaches
Verge
Ilelish
Zarushagar
Massila
Delphi
Glimmer-drift Reaches
Clashes Between Dulinor and Daibei
Anaxias
Liasdi
Margaret's Stronghold
Vaward
Warinir
Libert
Former Solomani Border
Hlakhoi
Ealiyasiyw
Reaver's Deep
Daibei
Diaspora
Old Expanses
Hinter-Worlds
Occupied by the Imperium
Marlheim
Imperial Border
The Aslan Hierate
Staihaia'yo
Iwahfuah
Dark Nebula
Kusyu
Magyar
Solomani
Dingir
Rim
Terra
Alpha Crucis
Spica
The Solomani Confederation
Home
The Hive Federation
Aktifao
Uistilao
Ustral Quadrant
Canopus
Aldebaran
Neworld
Langere



gained the major industrial centers of the Expanses, putting them in a position to threaten the entire Imperial core. Fortunately for Lucan, Solomani strength proved inadequate to break the Imperial supply line to the Vegan redoubt. The front stabilized after 1117, but constantly drained ships from Lucan's resources.

The Imperial regions adjoining the newly-conquered Solomani territories remained staunch supporters of Lucan, but they required support from the main body of the Imperial Navy to survive. Lucan could not ignore them. He knew he couldn't win here, but further defeats could unseat him. Meanwhile, the Solomani consolidated their major gains and continued attrition warfare, watching and waiting for a complete Imperial collapse.

**VARGR INVASIONS**

The Lishun Sector Fleet, under orders from Lucan, withdrew and transferred to the Ilelish battle front. Lishun sector, on the seemingly quiet coreward edge of the Imperium, remained peaceful for a few months. However, it was soon rocked by a series of invasions from the Vargr Extents. Meeting little or no resistance, the alien Vargr invaders became bolder, pushing their incursions nearly to the edge of the Imperium's Core sector itself.

Further spinward, trouble erupted in the Corridor sector: the bridge between the Imperial core and the Domain of Deneb. Passing between a stellar rift and the Vargr border, Corridor sector is easily blocked. Only continuous patrols by very strong naval fleets kept the expansionistic Vargr governments at bay. When Lucan withdrew the Corridor fleet to support his efforts in battling Dulinor, Vargr states crossed the border to plunder and loot.

Sectors neighboring Corridor felt the sting of the Vargr raids almost immediately. Express boat traffic carrying interstellar communication came to a halt. Merchant ships cancelled scheduled routes. Within a year, the sector was in chaos.

Lucan's action had served to isolate him from the Domain of Deneb, trapped on Corridor's far side. In his obsessive drive to crush Dulinor, Deneb's ten percent of the Imperium seemed relatively unimportant to Lucan. Later, when he discovered himself doing battle on a growing number of fronts, he desperately wished for the resources of Deneb's thirty-four fleets.

**OTHER FACTIONS FORM: MARGARET**

Lucan's reign produced profound doubts from many Imperial nobles about the future of Imperium. Some settled on Duchess Margaret Yetrina Tukera, the first cousin of Strephon, as a viable choice for the Throne.

Margaret shared the concern of many that a new Long Night was possible. She dedicated herself to using her assets to delay or avoid such a catastrophe and accepted leadership of a faction opposed to Lucan.

Margaret's supporters circulated a confidential message throughout the Imperial fleets stating her position and urging their support. This resulted in several crucial fleets declaring their allegiance to Margaret. Although Lucan ordered her arrest, Margaret had already left Capital to establish a stronghold in Delphi sector. By mid-1117, most of the Delphi sector was pledged to Margaret's support.

**STREPHON LIVES?**

In mid-1117, the Imperium was shocked as Strephon surfaced in Gushemege sector and announced that Dulinor had killed a double. He urged that all Imperial citizens unite in the goal to destroy Dulinor and unseat Lucan. Both of those factions took extensive steps to suppress news of Strephon's return.

Dulinor and Lucan placed severe restrictions on information passing through their territories. Both placed embargoes on Gushemege sector, and committed forces to destroying Strephon. For a while, they succeeded in containing news of Strephon's return to Gushemege sector. However, as the news leaked, both took the initiative in discrediting the "Real Strephon" as a fraud — perhaps one of the late Emperor's doubles. Even today, there is doubt regarding the true identity of the man who calls himself Strephon.

**BZRK**

Archduke Brzk of Antares, a Vargr with a long lineage of Imperial citizenship, is one of the few non-humans to rise to such a level in the Imperial nobility. When presented with the facts that indicated Lucan had likely murdered his own brother to assure his ascension, Archduke Brzk decided to take matters into his own hands. With the Moot dissolved and Lucan on the throne, he worked very quietly toward lining up the necessary support in Imperial nobility to put himself on the Throne. Finding that human nobles would not even consider placing a non-human on the throne surprised him. Ultimately, he decided to withdraw his region from the Imperium altogether.

Brzk returned to Antares and began mobilization of his forces. Brzk declared independence for Antares sector on 302-1117. Lucan reacted by starting to divert forces towards Antares. Two months later, the newly-formed League of Antares announced that it had joined the neighboring, powerful Julian Protectorate as a member confederation. Lucan's limited forces backed off rather than confront the combined Protectorate's fleets.

**1118: THE STRUGGLE FOR STRENGTH**

Lucan felt he needed more and more fleets to fight Dulinor. Obsessed with Dulinor's defeat, he requisitioned the remaining loyal frontier fleets — those of the Vland and Daibei sectors. Both sectors eventually seceded rather than obey. An enraged Lucan diverted parts of what reserves he had to reconquer those regions, but neither were large enough to succeed.

Dulinor repeated his successful raiding tactics from the previous year. The 166th Fleet reached Core sector, but suffered grievous losses from better-prepared defenders. Few ships returned.

The Vilani race (of Vland sector) turned their backs on the Imperium, forming the Restored Vilani Empire. Secret orders for an immediate transfer of assets to Vland's home sector went to bases and stations of the three Vilani interstellar megacorporations. Anything that couldn't be moved was abandoned or sold at fire sale prices.

Lucan now had eight fronts to contend with.

**1119: THE PUSH TOWARD EXHAUSTION**

The basic boundaries of the factions as they exist today were drawn by 1119. Early in that year, settling for part of the Imperium rather than its apparently unattainable whole, Dulinor formally renamed his government the Federation of Ilelish. Lucan focused on regaining full control of the Imperial core, through defeating the "Real Strephon" and Dulinor.

By early 1119, the Vilani megacorporations had disposed of most of their assets and had reconsolidated in the Restored Vilani Empire. Regions once served by them were left crippled industrially and/or without cargo service.

Vland's three megacorporations had major shares of the large interstellar transports. The loss of these ships left industries on many worlds short of raw materials and supplies. Local merchant lines and manufacturers were unable to fill the gap.

Although buyers of the abandoned Vilani installations received working factories, they did not get the support network that connected them. Some sought new sources of raw materials. Others used substitute materials to produce poorer-quality goods. Most just produced what quantities they could from the available materials. The megacorporate-inflicted wound festered.

Many secondary starports were corporation-owned. These

**REBELLION TIMELINE**

**1103**
- Dulinor elevated to Archduke of Domain of Ilelish, an economically-depressed region.

**1107**
- Fifth Frontier War started by Zhodani invasion of Spinward Marches.

**1111**
- Peace Treaty ends Fifth Frontier War.

**1116**
- Emperor Strephon and family assassinated by Dulinor. The Rebellion officially begins
- Lucan ascends the Iridium Throne in private ceremonies.
- Dulinor reaches Dlan, announces his claim to the throne.
- Norris announces his promotion to Archduke received from Strephon.

**1117**
- Norris' household releases news of Strephon's assassination.
- Fleet Command issues transfer orders to Corridor, Lishun, and Old Expanses fleets.
- Lucan leaves with Core Fleet to confront Dulinor.
- Terra besieged by Solomani fleets.
- Much of Lishun sector has been overrun by Vargr.
- Imperial successes against Dulinor and Solomani stabilize fighting.
- "Real Strephon" appears on Usdiki in Gushemege.
- Antares refuses to transfer additional fleets into the Core.
- Travel routes through Corridor fully severed by Vargr.
- Solomani announce liberation of Terra; scattered Imperial forces remain.
- Archduke Brzk renounces oath of loyalty to Emperor Lucan.
- Fighting on Dulinor-Lucan Front dies out. Ship losses and exhausted missile stocks force cease-fire.
- Old Expanses surrenders. Incorporated into Solomani Confederation.

**1118**
- Lucan's Fleet Command issues orders to transfer additional fleets from the frontiers: Vland, Daibei, Delphi, Ley.
- Massed Vargr squadrons gain control of Depot/Corridor, making permanent occupation of Corridor possible.
- Lucan's government downplays reports of his nuclear and chemical attacks on cities in Gushemege.
- Vland sector declares independence and forms Restored Vilani Empire.
- Lucan commits resources to replacing nobles and planetary governments which have not declared support for him. Later he institutes a policy of keeping family members hostage on Capital.
- Strephon begins offensive, causing major conflict with Dulinor.
- Lucan's offensive against Solomani in Old Expanses.
- Lucan's offensive against Margaret in Delphi.
- Daibei sector declares independence.
- Lucan's offensive against Strephon at Phaln.
- Elements of Lucan's Loyal Fleet invade Daibei.

**1119**
- Margaret begins offensive against Solomani in Old Expanses.
- Lucan's Admiral Wainfrost bombards high population worlds with nuclear weapons to reduce their value before retreating. Dulinor's admirals halt their advance in Dagudashaag.
- Offensives between Dulinor and Strephon end in mutual exhaustion.
- Dulinor pushes in Massilia, cutting Imperium in half.
- Solomani forces begin to break up before Margaret. Scattered engagements continue in Old Expanses for several months.
- Strephon's forces advance into Massilia.

**1120**
- Lucan launches fleets into Gushemege to devastate worlds. Real Strephon almost killed.
- Vland begins offensives against corsairs in Corridor and Lishun.
- Strephon begins offensive into Vland.
- Domain of Deneb capital moved to Mora.

were turned over to new owners, as experienced workers left for Vland or activated repatriation bonds to other worlds. Many of these starports which thrived on the megacorporate business and traffic were left with virtual "ghost ports".

Marketing arrangements fell apart as goods didn't arrive, or arrived in inadequate quantities. In many cases, friction developed between buyers and sellers from different races who had dealt through Vilani middlemen. Latent cultural and linguistic differences emerged to bedevil trade.

The Vilani withdrawal hit the areas along the Solomani borders and the robotics and electronics industries hardest, but every region of the Imperium was hit (save the Restored Vilani Empire). Protectionist measures by worlds afraid of a Long Night and local factors created many depressed regions.

**1120: THE SIDES DIG IN**

Weakened by cumulative ship losses, the participants in the Imperium-wide civil war, which had come to be termed collectively as "The Rebellion", settled down to protracted campaigns to control high population worlds. The resources of such worlds proved to be of great strategic importance. Fleets could fight in space forever. Controlling a high population world meant controlling what really counted: the inhabitants' hearts and minds.

Campaigns for disputed worlds changed the nature of Rebellion warfare. Naval forces were now primarily a show of force to interfere with commerce and blockade worlds. Most fleets could bomb a world back into the stone age, but such barbarous tactics were only considered in extreme cases of insurmountable opposition.

**CONTENDING FOR HEARTS AND MINDS**

Today, the once-mighty Third Imperium is splintered into an array of different factions, each with its own dreams and goals. As the legitimate heir to the Iridium Throne of the Third Imperium, Lucan holds the reins of power and controls the existing Imperial bureaucracy. Lucan's forces are the strongest, but he has had the most territory to defend, longer borders, and more adversaries.

Lucan is still concerned only with results. His remaining followers use any means to fulfil their orders. They also carefully cover themselves, documenting that they are following their supreme commander's current lead.

Dulinor's program of consistent treatment of citizens on all Imperial worlds has broad appeal, but his cause has been crippled by public reaction to the murder of the Emperor, Dulinor's patron. Many see Dulinor as the instigator of all the trouble. With a solid power base in Ilelish and Zarushagar sectors, Dulinor has renamed his government the Federation of Ilelish, and seems aimed only for maintaining his region.

Instead of raising war fleets to conquer territory, Margaret's goal is to keep merchant ships, the lifeblood of interstellar society, moving. She slowly and diplomatically absorbed former Imperial assets, bringing starports under her control and taking over naval and scout bases. She has a strong power base among nobles in all parts of the Imperium, and being astrographically close to Capital has provided her with a steady stream of defectors fed up with Lucan. Recently, Lucan feared a reconvened Moot would legitimize Margaret's claim to the Throne.

In the Domain of Deneb, Archduke Norris Aella Aledon (Norris) initially declared continued loyalty to the Third Imperium, without specifying which claimant should lead the Imperium. However, events quickly divorced his domain from the Imperial Core. Withdrawal of the Corridor Fleet made traversing Corridor dicey in 1117; Vargr conquest of Corridor sector and Vland's secession combined to sever all reliable communications and transport by 1118.

With the Imperial destabilization, the Aslan colonies perched on the Great Rift saw their chance to claim new lands. A crawling line of Aslan colonization vessels slowly encroached on the Domain of Deneb borders. These alien "squatters" claimed any territories which were not actively settled.

Facing major threats on the opposite Vargr and Aslan fronts, the Domain of Deneb could not muster the forces needed to reestablish communication with the Imperial core.

Beyond these personalities and forces lie a number of others. Smaller movements abound, attempting to seize the opportunity for advancements of their cause in the face of a crippled Imperium. The fighting continues and the question remains unanswered: are we heading into a second Long Night?


# Digest Group Has Moved!

**Our new address is:**

**Digest Group Publications**
**515 Willow**
**Woodburn, Oregon 97071**
**Phone: (503) 981-4752**


## CONVENTIONS CONVENTIONS!

### UT-BASH(BASHCON)
### March 8-10, 1991

Location is the University of Toledo.

Activities will include: board games, computer games, and play by mail games, discussions on science fiction, literature and related fields.

For more information write to: Student Activities Office, UT-BASH (BASHCON), 2801 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, OH 43606.

### DRAGON CON
### July12-14, 1991

Location is the Atlanta Hilton and Towers4.

Georgia's science fiction, fantasy, gaming, and comic convention for everyone! Plus many special guests like Mike Jittlov, costume contest, video room, Japanese animation room, audio listening room, folk singing, banquet, gaming, and art show.

For more information write to: Ed Kramer, Chairman, Box 47696, Atlanta, GA 30362. Telephone: (404) 921-7148.

# A GUIDE TO THE DOMAIN OF DENEB

**BEGINNERS' LUCK:** *By Rob Caswell*

The Domain of Deneb has always been a frontier region. Its remote location has forced it to maintain this status. It was one of seven domains which made up the Third Imperium. These artificial political regions were presided over by archdukes and designed to streamline the Imperial bureaucracy, which became burdened by the slow speed of communications. Duke Norris of the Regina subsector was elevated to the position of Domain of Deneb Archduke, just before news of Strephon's assassination hit the region. Recently relocated, the current capital of the Domain is Mora (Spinward Marches 3124), a prominent, centrally-located world.

**BEHIND THE CLAW**

Spanning four sectors ( an area 209 by 260 light years), the Domain sits on the other side of a narrow bridge connecting it to the body of the Shattered Imperium. This vital strip of connecting stars sits in the Corridor sector. It was the Vargr occupation of this narrow channel of supply and communication which cut the Domain off from the Imperium and forced Archduke Norris to pursue independent goals in order to keep his region alive.

To either side of the Corridor's stellar isthmus lie great stellar deserts, largely impassable. On the coreward flank, the *Windhorn* winds its way into the Vargr Extents, while rimward lies the yawning expanse of the *Great Rift.*

On astrogation maps, the shape of the Great Rift looks almost like a claw, reaching up to the Corridor sector. Domain inhabitants have latched onto this imagery, referring to the area of the Domain as "behind the claw".

Though the "astrographic" region of the Domain covers four sectors, the actual "political" boundaries of the Domain of Deneb (the region under Norris' jurisdiction) are a large cluster of star systems within those sectors.

**NATIONS WITHIN AND WITHOUT**

Beyond these physical borders, the Domain is further defined by political boundaries. Immediately spinward lies the great bulk of the Zhodani Consulate, an empire encompassing over 6,000 worlds inhabited by psionically-gifted humans.

Crouching on the Domain's coreward side, the Vargr Extents are home to a race of genetically-uplifted, sentient Earth canines. Though their splintered organization and infighting prevents them from coming together as a cohesive racial federation, their numerous smaller states still pose a threat to the Domain. One of the greatest of these threats is the Dzarrgh Federate, who have cut across the Corridor sector, blocking access to the Shattered Imperium and raiding worlds and ships along the Domain border.

The Domain's rimward border meets the expanding colonies of the Aslan, a fierce, vaguely feline race whose homeworld lies across the Great Rift.

Embedded in this tapestry of political giants lie a number of smaller but critically important interstellar nations. Friendly to the Domain, the twenty-one-world Darrian Confederation hovers beyond the Domain's spinward border. Primarily inhabited by a human minor race calling themselves the Darrians, this knot of star systems once possessed a technological level of sixteen — one higher than the current level of Domain technology. However, in contemporary times, such high-tech items are merely artifacts of a bygone age as the Darrians' technological prowess has deteriorated.

Wedged between the Darrian and Domain borders sits the Sword World Confederation. This loosely-knit group of worlds settled by colonists from Earth in the distant past has a record of discord first with Imperial, and now with Domain interests.

The Frontier Wars (see below) have shaped the Domain's history and political astrography. At the conclusion of the most recent of these conflicts, several systems of the Sword Worlds (who were siding with the Zhodani in the battle) were occupied by Imperial troops and united into an Imperial puppet state. This cluster became known as the Border Worlds Confederation.

Squeezed in between the Zhodani Consulate and the Domain of Deneb lies the small Federation of Arden. Though this human-controlled state is repressive and expansionistic, its location and neutrality have made it a meeting ground for diplomatic talks of the Domain and Consulate.

Other small interstellar governments lie in the extra-Domain backwater. The most notable of these are the Belgardian Sojourn and the Florian League, a cluster of worlds inhabited by a human-derived race genetically altered by the Ancients, millennia past.

**HISTORY: EARLY COLONIZATION**

Major colonization efforts of the First and Second Imperiums penetrated only as far as the Corridor sector. It wasn't until the rise of the Third Imperium that ships pushed the spinward frontier forward. Major colonization took place between 75-400 Imperial (4593-4918 A.D.). As the Imperium expanded into the Domain, it met many races (alien and human) — few with interstellar governments of any consequence, until it contacted the Zhodani Consulate.

**THE FRONTIER WARS**

The Third Imperium and the Zhodani have always experienced heated relations. Though an observer within the Domain may point to the Zhodani's use of psionics as the reason, it's more the Imperium's *lack* of psionic tolerance that has aggravated relations. To the Zhodani, hiding one's thoughts from telepathic contact is indicative of a deceitful and dishonest nature.

Tensions between the Consulate and Imperium escalated into a series of Frontier Wars. In most cases, the Sword Worlds and some of the Vargr states allied with the Zhodani to form The Outworld Coalition. Five of these Frontier Wars were fought, the most recent ending in 1110 (ten years ago, game time). Though small parcels of star systems changed hands in the conflicts, the end result left the political boundaries largely unchanged.

Since the last war, relations between Norris' realm and the Consulate have improved, though somewhat of a cold war atmosphere remains.

**REBELLION ISOLATION**

After the assassination of Strephon in 1116, the new Imperial emperor, Lucan, became obsessed with achieving the demise of Dulinor, Strephon's assassin and claimant to the throne. To this end, he ordered the fleets of Corridor sector to come to his aid. This void of military force invited the expansionistic Vargr to storm the worlds of the vulnerable Corridor sector.

With the Corridor sector overrun by raiding Vargr, the Domain found itself cut off from the Imperium. At that point, Norris' number one priority became saving the territory of the Domain for its inhabitants.

Shortly after the Vargr problem reared its snarling head, land-hungry Aslan from the nearby Aslan colonies began encroaching on territory on the other side of the Domain. Though not a military invasion, they consumed (usually) unclaimed resources and generated fear and anger among Domain citizens.

Fortunately, the Zhodani have chosen to remain quiet during these years of crisis. Cut off from the power of the Imperial core, the Domain is no longer perceived as a great threat to the Consulate.

**REBELLION-ERA HOT SPOTS**

Though technically not at war, the Domain of Deneb is now a more conflict-ridden region than ever before. This makes the area undoubtedly one of the richest backdrops for adventuring within the Shattered Imperium setting.

Domain regions bordering the Vargr states represent a number of adventuring possibilities, ranging from escorting merchant ships through raider-riddled territories to recovering items stranded on a Vargr-dominated world. For those fond of open combat, this arena provides ample opportunity.

Diplomatic intrigue and covert activity abound in the Federation of Arden. As a major contact point with the Zhodani Consulate, this region can provide an excellent stage for those looking for adventure in the flavor of *James Bond*, or Keith Laumer's two-fisted diplomat, *Retief*. In addition, the repressive nature of the Federation society lends another level of challenge and complexity.

With military forces being drawn off to confront the Vargr and Aslan threats, the Border Worlds are in danger of destabilizing. Formed from ex-Sword World systems, this client state already harbors an anti-Imperial (anti-Domain) bias.

The Sword Worlds themselves have their jealous eyes locked on the troubled Domain. Envious of Domain technology and resources, they have launched a covert war to even the odds between themselves and Norris' worlds.

Of course, the steady onslaught of Aslan colonists is a handful in its own right. If it's not nailed down or doesn't have a flag planted on it, the Aslan consider it up for grabs. Tensions continue to rise as the Aslan continue to make themselves unwanted neighbors on many Domain worlds on the rimward border.

Not without internal problems, some worlds of the Domain teeter on a political knife edge — some falling into planetary warfare due to internal problems. Topping it all off with 48 alien races and a bevy of unique environments, the Domain provides the ideal locale for the stuff of classic science fiction adventure.

**DOMAIN OF DENEB LIBRARY DATA**

**Abyss:** Engulfing most of the Lanth/Spinward Marches subsector and extending into the Vilis and Lunion subsectors, the Abyss is a large area of low stellar density. It has been the site of several notable ship disappearances over the last half-millennium and has built up a substantial amount of lore associated with them. Only seven systems lie within the Abyss' boundaries.

**Aledon, Norris Aella:** Since 1117, Archduke Norris has served as "provisional" ruler over the Domain of Deneb. Upon consolidation of his forces and territories, Norris stated that his position was one of loyalty to the Imperium. Though this is still his officially stated position, as time passes it becomes clear that Norris' directions and goals have to follow a unique path in order for the region to survive as an entity. Born as second son to the Duke of Regina, Norris was never expected to fill his father's position. Norris joined naval intelligence and served creditably until his brother's premature death. With his brother dead and father dying, Norris was forced to take on the responsibilities of the Duke of Regina.

His naval intelligence contacts allowed him to predict the Fifth Frontier War and appeal to the emperor for reinforcements in advance. When the tide of the war turned against the Imperium, he assumed control over the Imperial fleets and successfully turned back the tide. This victory brought him both political and popular support. In 1114, Emperor Strephon officially acknowledged Norris' outstanding actions during the Fifth Frontier War by elevating him to Archduke of Deneb. This made him the highest ranking noble on the spinward frontier.

A year after the news of Stephon's assassination reached Norris at Regina, the Domain of Deneb was cut off from the rest of the empire as the Vargr overran the Corridor sector. This event, combined with the obvious chaos occurring closer to the Imperial core, caused Norris to declare the Domain independent until such a time when the empire could peacefully reintegrate itself. His proclamation as provisional leader met with little resistance, as his popularity continues at high levels.

**Al Moral:** Based on Mora, the merchant line Al Morai services the central portion of the Domain of Deneb. Established in 120 as a local transport company serving systems within ten parsecs of Mora, the company soon expanded to handle freight and passengers. During the third century imperial, the line established an exploration division to supplement its cargo carriers.

The Rebellion-era environment has provided Al Morai with many growth opportunities, making them one of the most prominent carriers in the Domain. The company's *Route Protectors*, a small fleet of privately commissioned *Gazelle*-class close escorts, have enabled them to maintain reliable service through troubled areas of space.

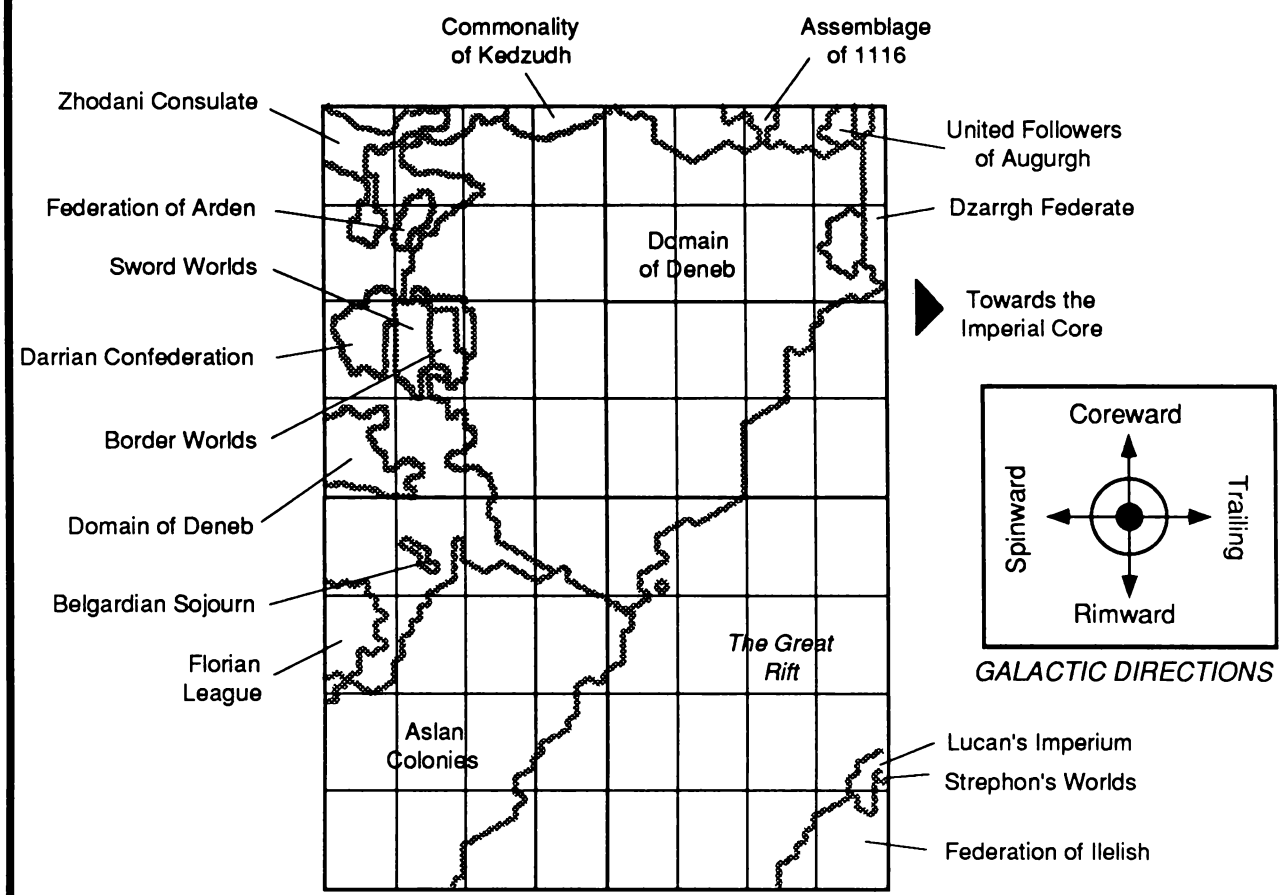
**Arden, Federation of:** The independent, human-inhabited state of the Federation of Arden consists of Arden (Spinward Marches 1011) and six other star systems. Arden is controlled by the Arden Society, a small group of dedicated individuals who become members through financial or labor contributions. The government is extremely repressive. In the years since the close of the Fifth Frontier War, the Federation has pursued expansionistic policies which have not been looked upon favorably by the Domain.

**Aslan Aorlakht:** With the racial imperative of land ownership equating status, Aslan *ihatei* (second sons) have been claiming lands further and further away from the core of the Aslan Hierate. Expanding out from the colonies on the coreward side of the rift, a wave of ihatei calling themselves the Aorlakht ("New Lords" or "New Landholders") took advantage of the Rebellion chaos to expand into the Rimward end of the Domain in 1117.

Though searching for new, unclaimed territories, their unwanted progression into Domain space has lead to a number of conflicts. In 1118, Fleet Admiral Tranathiaf was dispatched to the area to deal with the threat. Through the numerous skirmishes and negotiation attempts, little has yet been resolved.

**Assemblage of 1116:** An opportunist Vargr state formed after news of Strephon's assassination reached Tuglikki. Led by the dictatorial Arruna Kosghaele Zal of Ngorsraek (Tuglikki 1937 B4438AE-B), the Assemblage has extended its influence over thirty-one worlds in both Deneb and Tuglikki sectors.

The Assemblage is fiercely hostile to the Imperium. While Archduke Norris' fleets have managed to stave off many raids by independent corsairs, Assemblage forces have wreaked major damage on the economies of Lamas and Antra subsectors. Shipping and communications in that




# The Domain of Deneb and Surrounds *CIRCA 1120*

region have been severely disrupted since the rise of the Assemblage in 1116.

**Border Worlds Confederation:** Established as an Imperial client-state from occupied worlds along the Imperial/Sword World border in 1111, the Border Worlds is a federation tightly controlled by its capital at Beater (Spinward Marches 1424). Due to its nature, the Border Worlds has been a hotbed of Domain/Sword World tensions.

**"Behind the Claw":** A slang term used by the inhabitants of the Domain of Deneb to refer to their realm. The term derives from a supposed resemblance between a claw and the Great Rift, as seen on maps of the Imperium. The term is rarely used by those living outside the Domain.

**Bridled Steed:** Taking its subject from the horned-horse of Terran mythology, the "Bridled Steed", an emergent unicorn, is a constellation spanning the Chronor and Jewell subsectors. Archduke Norris' family has always used the image as a symbol of its own holdings in the Spinward Marches. When Norris required a symbol to represent the Domain of Deneb, the unicorn seemed a natural choice.

**Darrian Confederation:** A group of worlds in the Darrian subsector settled by a minor human race from Darrian (Spinward Marches 0627) during the period -1137 to -927. The current capital is Mire (Spinward Marches 0527).

Physiologically, Darrians sport a number of adaptations resulting from their homeworld's environment, however most are not apparent at a glance. The noticeable differences lie in their golden pigmentation, slight build, and pointed ears. Their biology remains closely enough linked to allow interbreeding with the Solomani. Ethnic Darrians usually display a stoic, tolerant air.

The Darrian Confederation is a loose organization of 18 worlds with close ties to the Domain of Deneb. Compositionally, the Confederation consists of a blend of races: 20% Solomani, 8% Aslan, 12% assorted human races, and 60% Darrian. Confederation inhabitants are known for their focus in scholastic and technological activities. Tourism also plays a significant role in their economy.

With a tech level of 16 (one higher than the Imperial standard), Darrian's greatest strength lies in its astrophysical sciences. Darrian scientists are reputed to be able to induce subnova flares in stars at will.

**Dzarrgh Federate:** Formed around Dzarrvaer (Deneb 0224 A100757-F) in the mid-1090s, the Dzarrgh Federate is a very typical Vargr government. The Federate incorporates a number of long-independent worlds, allowing them a high degree of autonomy. Most member worlds pay no taxes to the capital, and no unified judicial system exists. Some political scientists have gone so far as to call the Federate a astrographical region rather than a governmental body.

Since 1117, the Federate has become a base for raids on Imperial ships and worlds in Deneb and Corridor sectors.

Dzarrgh corsairs and naval forces have flooded across the border, seizing everything in their path. Checking Federate expansion has severely taxed the capabilities of the Domain's Navy, and more recently, the Patrol.

**Ebokin:** An alien minor race native to Yebab (Spinward Marches 3002). Ebokin are eight-legged four-armed beings with low-slung bodies. They average 0.8 meters tall and 1.5 meters long, with the female of the species coming in slightly smaller. Ebokin society is a very conservative matriarchy, bound by strict, unchanging laws. They seldom leave their homeworld.

**Frontier Wars:** A series of wars between the Zhodani Consulate and the Imperium. The most recent, the Fifth Frontier War (1107-1110), brought elements of the Vargr and the Sword Worlds in an allegiance with the Zhodani to form the Outworld Coalition. The armistice resulted in no loss of worlds to the hostiles and returned to the status quo.

**Glisten (Spinward Marches 2036 A000986-F):** Capital of the Glisten subsector and one of the most populous "worlds" in the Domain, the asteroid belt of Glisten is a major industrial center for high tech products. Glisten's technical reputation also covers ship building, with the Bilstein yards being the most notable manufacturer. Though not extraordinarily extensive, Glisten's belt is both massive and rich.

Recently, the system has been an arena for claim wars between the encroaching Aslan and Domain inhabitants. With Glisten's great population density, there is little in the system that remains unclaimed. Ignoring many corporate and private holdings, the Aslan Aorlakht have been pillaging many of the system's resources.

**Gl'lu:** An alien minor race from Kubishush (Deneb 0917). Their planet circles at the outer edge of the star's habitable zone, giving them average temperatures of -40 degrees C. A dense nitrogen atmosphere hides ammonia seas and geologically active terrain.

The Gl'lu are a hermaphroditic species sporting four arms and three legs on their stout bodies. Crowning their heads are three eye stalks. Oxidation of the ammonia in the air drives their metabolism.

**Jumpspace Institute, The:** Originally financed by the Duke of Deneb to research and refine jump drive technology. Since then, the institute has become an arm of the Domain's government, regulating advanced starship technologies and setting the industry's standards. They provide training programs for starship engineers and naval architects.

**Llellewyloly:** A minor race native to Junidy (Spinward Marches 3202). They have five multi-jointed limbs which serve as hands and feet interchangeably. Their main sensory organs are also located on the limbs. Long, course hair covers their spherical, central bodies. Physiologically, they are adapted to Junidy's daily temperature extremes.

Llellewyloly society is filled with subtle complexities. A being's social status is always in flux, from one situation to the next, and to make an error in propriety is a serious matter. Their tech level 3 society is non-starfaring.

**Mora (Spinward Marches 3124 AA99AC7-F):** Currently serving as the capital of the Domain of Deneb, Mora sits fairly near the Domain's astrographic center. Its location and history have granted it the title of "Gateway to the Marches". The bulk of the world's 10 billion population resides in a sprawling mega-city, straddling the equator and covering most of the major continent. The Duchess Delphine currently holds the reins of power in the world's matriarchy.

Beyond its importance as the Domain's capital, the Mora system's belt is home to most of the significant biotech industries. The belt environment has provided them with a safe and flexible environment for research while being positioned at a large nexus of trade routes.

Mora has two asteroidal moons of great age. Current theories hold that they are cometary remnants.

**Oberlines Lines:** A trade and transport corporation, based in the Spinward Marches, whose expanding activities have taken it into the Deneb sector and the Vargr Extents. Founded in 487, this regional line has prospered in the wake of the Domain's move to independence.

**Regina (Spinward Marches 1910 A788899-C):** Regina is a sizable moon circling the gas giant, Assiniboia. Homeworld to Archduke Norris and subsector capital, it is one of the most significant frontier worlds. Situated relatively near the border of the Zhodani Consulate and the Federation of Arden, Regina has been the site chosen for an ongoing series of diplomatic talks aimed at improving the Domain's foreign relations.

**SMART Library Data, LIC:** Organized by Eura Regnis of the Regina Center for Research, the Spinward Marches Archival Retrieval Team (SMART) was conceived in 1117 to restore library data service throughout the Domain. By 1119, SMART was up and running. The team's members were derived from both the academic and business communities, and include noted journalist Akidda Laagiir, SMART's director since its opening.

A semi-private company, SMART is guided by a board appointed by Archduke Norris. The company gathers its information from both government-subsidized and private sources. SMART branch offices can be found on most major worlds in the Domain.

**Sword Worlds Confederation:** A loose confederation of human-inhabited worlds spinward of Imperial space in the Spinward Marches. The region was first settled by Solomani sleeper ships in -399. The official language of the Sword Worlds is derived from Terran Icelandic, though borrowing heavily from other tongues.

The government allows almost complete local autonomy. Individual worlds maintain separate military forces, pass their own laws, and completely regulate their own internal affairs. The Confederation government regulates interworld trade, handles diplomatic foreign relations, and adjudicates interworld disputes. During times of war, all military forces are confederalized and placed under a unified command.

Sword World culture, though technically diverse from world to world, has many points of common ground. The culture is highly militaristic and male-dominated. Obedience and honor are highly stressed attributes. Though the Sword Worlds do not suppress psionics talents, they do not make them an integral part of their society, as the Zhodani do.

The Sword Worlds allied with the Outworld Coalition against the Imperium during the Fifth Frontier War and have a history of unsteady relations with the Imperium.

**Zhodani Consulate:** A large region spinward of the Domain inhabited by the human major race known as the Zhodani. Though similar in most respects to other human races, the Zhodani tend to be taller and more lithe of build than Solomani or Vilani. Their most notable difference lies in their acceptance and use of psionics.

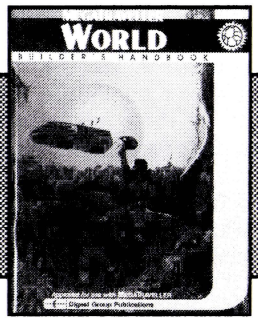
Zhodani society is based on a rigid class system defined by psionic abilities. Because of their psionic talents, the Zhodani have the most effective authoritarian rule in history. The Tavrchedl' (referred to as the "Thought Police" by many Domain inhabitants) are a special branch of psionic operatives charged with maintaining correct thought within the population. The Imperial anti-psionic policies have been a long-standing point of dispute between the regions. The Zhodani comprised the major opposition force during the Fifth Frontier War.

# MEGATRAVELLER

THE SCIENCE FICTION ROLE-PLAYING GAME FOR THE '90s AND BEYOND

## WORLD BUILDER'S HANDBOOK

Detail a world and its culture to a level you never thought possible. Combining and revising the popular *Grand Survey/Grand Census* rules, this product is stuffed full of detailed world generation rules, equipment, and ship deckplans. 96 pages. Price: $11.95.



## VILANI & VARGR

The first volume in the new series on the aliens of **MegaTraveller's** universe, this product covers two of the game's major races. Includes details on technology, culture, astrography, and much more. Experience these races as you never have before! 104 pages. Price: $12.95

## STARSHIP OPERATOR'S MANUAL

Detailing operations for both the player and referee, this 64-page book discusses all the technical details of starships in the ***MegaTraveller*** universe. Includes an illustrated tour & fold-out plans for the 200-ton free trader; plus many useful diagrams and charts. Price: $8.95.

## 101 VEHICLES

An illustrated compendium of 101 different vehicles, ranging from the largest hypergrav transports to one-man motorcycles. Each vehicle is fully illustrated and described, with six of the craft in full color. 48 pages. Price: $7.95.

**ALSO AVAILABLE:**

- **THE MEGATRAVELLER JOURNAL Magazine:** Packed with lots of new ***MegaTraveller*** material in each quarterly issue. Topics include new equipment, ship designs, library data, Rebellion era news, maps, adventures, new rules, Q&A column, and more! Single issues $4.95. One-year subscription (four quarterly issues) $18 U.S. and Canada, $26 Overseas.

VISA

*Ask your local dealer for these products or order direct (P&H: 6% — U.S. and Canada/ 15% - 30% Overseas)*

**Digest Group Publications**

515 Willow, Woodburn, OR 97071
Voice/Fax: (503) 981-4752

# ENAAKA

**WORLDGUIDE:** *by William H.Keith, Jr.*

**ENAAKA**

Enaaka (Deneb 0203) is a world in the Deneb sector which lies somewhat off the beaten path in Deneb's Pretoria subsector. Following is an excerpt from from *The Pilot's Guide to the Pretoria Subsector*, 512th Edition, rev. 1105, Sydkai Publishing Group.

**Enaaka/Pretoria 0203 B7777786-6 Ag 922 Dd F5V**
**Primary:** Tranis, Spectral Class F5V. Mass: 1.3 Std. Stellar Diameter: 1.4 Std. Luminosity: 3.5 Std.
**Planetary System:** Ten major bodies. One inhabited world (Enaaka: Tranis IV). Two gas giants, two planetoid belts in system.

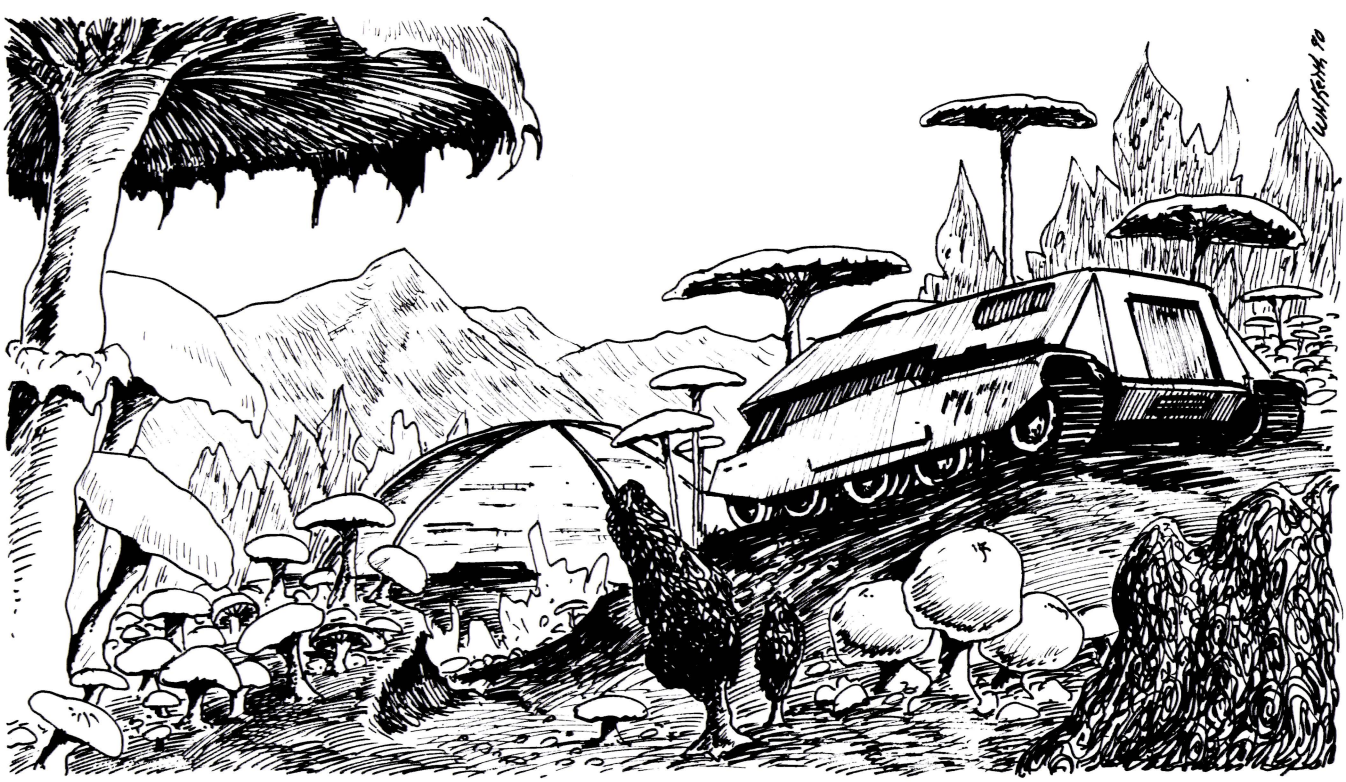
**IV Enaaka**
**Physical Planetary Data:** Mean Orbital Radius: 239,324,000 km. (1.6 A.U.). Orbital Period: 1.675 years (1y 246d 13h 3m 22s). Orbital Eccentricity: 0.005. Diameter: 11,992 km. Density: 0.96 Std. Mass: 0.643 Std. Surface Gravity: 0.84 G. Rotation Period: 25 h 16m 13.3s. Axial Inclination: 01° 05' 14". Albedo: 0.45. Hydrographic Percentage: 71%; Composition: Liquid H2O.
No natural satellites.
**Surface Temperature:** Base Temperature: 312° K (39° C.). Inclination and orbital eccentricity effects negligible. Temperature Range: Mean Polar Temp.: -3°C. Mean Equatorial Temp.: 57° C. Temperate Zones (Mean temperature 15° C. to 30°C.): Approximately Latitudes 45° to 55° North and South.

**Atmospheric Composition:** O2: 21.4%; N2: 75.63%; Argon: 0.973%; H2O (mean):1.9%; CO2: 345 ppm; Ne: 20.4 ppm; He: 5.11 ppm; CH4: 1.1 ppm; Other components <1 ppm. Atmospheric Pressure (sea level): 722 mm Hg (.95 bar).
*• [Warning Note: Atmosphere standard O2-N2 mix at standard pressure, but biological taint necessitates use of special filter apparatus.]*

**Physical Description:** Hot and moist over most of its surface, the planet first called Enaaka by early Vilani explorers is a hothouse world of exotic flora. Much like Earth in its physical aspects, a hotter, brighter sun has resulted in a base temperature higher than most humans prefer. The atmosphere is extremely humid, and in most temperate areas it is raining or drizzling nearly fifty percent of the time. From space, Enaaka appears to be a dazzling, cloud-swathed world.

With scant axial tilt or orbital eccentricity there are no seasons on Enaaka. Temperature and climate vary by altitude and latitude, but not from one part of the year to the next. Electrical storms are common and most areas below near-polar latitudes suffer a thunder storm at least once each day.

Temperatures at the poles hover around freezing. However, the continual circulation of moist, warm air from the lower latitudes guarantees that snowfalls, while common, do not accumulate. In the equatorial regions temperatures reach 50°C., and can be entered only by humans wearing special protective gear. Many of the equatorial areas — known as hotlands by the locals — remain unexplored except from orbit.



Temperatures are comfortable for humans within the temperate zones, though most visitors still find the mugginess and damp unpleasant. All buildings, cities, and vehicles are sealed and air-conditioned in order to exclude biological contaminants, however, and visitors can only directly experience the climate if they venture outside with class one environmental protection.

**Biology:** Enaaka can best be characterized as a world where the evolutionary race was won millions of years ago by fungi. Discounting microorganisms, over seventy percent of Enaaka's terrestrial lifeforms fall under the broad classification of *Enaakimycetes:* Enaakan Fungi. Enaaka is, in fact, sometimes popularly referred to as "the Fungus Planet."

Common forms found throughout the temperate areas include several thousand species of "tree-mushrooms," woody-growths ranging from a meter to well over thirty meters in height. Much of the ground is covered by a rubbery organism called "carpet sponge"; in other areas, brightly-colored polydactile fungi called "shimmerfoot" change colors or give off brilliant bioluminescence when stepped on.

Though the Enaakan ecology is dominated by fungi, non-fungal forms do exist. Most exist in close symbiosis with the fungi. Non-fungal forms in fact are necessary to the ecology; photosynthetic plants such as marine alga produce the oxygen in the atmosphere, and sugar-from-sunlight forms the base of the planet's ecological pyramid.

Fungal forms are relatively rare in Enaaka's oceans, but little is known about the planet's marine species as yet. Certain piscoids, crustaceans, and sea algae are important to the local economy as food, and "fish" and "seaweed-harvesting" craft operate out of all of the planet's coastal seaports.

**THE FUNGI OF ENAAKA**

Xenobotanists have catalogued over 700 distinct classes of *Enaakimycetes.* By way of comparison, there are eight classes of fungi within the classification *Eumycetes* on Earth. Tens of thousands of genera and millions of distinct species have been studied, but it is widely acknowledged that Enaakan mycological studies have barely scratched the surface. Whole, vast regions of the planet remain where very little is known about the dominant lifeforms. The severe environmental conditions and extreme hazards from certain predaceous fungal forms have sharply limited research on this world.

Enaakan fungi represent both the world's greatest danger and potential. Scores of fungus-related conditions and diseases exist, many of them fatal, some spectacularly so. Human enterprise on Enaaka is primarily concerned with the harvest and processing of certain types of fungus valued for their pharmacological or gourmet commercial worth.

A few of the more commonly harvested or sought-after species are listed below.

**Enaakan Gold:** A golden, upright fungus resembling terrestrial morels. Its spores are highly-prized by local prospectors and fetch good prices in the cities. Extremely rare. Range: Valpasin hotlands only.

**Moldbread:** A flat, whitish, leathery plant resembling terrestrial shelf fungus. It is edible when cooked, and is widely grown and harvested as a staple food product on the planet. Explorers in the wild frequently use moldbread to reduce the food supplies they must carry. Limited quantities are shipped offworld, where they are served in gourmet restaurants as exotic delicacies called "shalamar" or "heavenbread." Extremely common. Range: temperate zones and hotlands worldwide.

**Phycetta:** *Phycetta sp.*, a small, white mushroom with a sweet taste commonly harvested on Enaaka for food. Quantities are shipped offworld, where Phycetta is prized as an exotic dessert called *Enaakan sweetflowers.* On Enaaka, "phybread" is a common trail staple and survival food, rich in protein and sugar, easily dried and carried in pack or terrain vehicle supply locker. Common. Range: temperate zones.

**Silverbread**: *Argenteapanis smythii* is a silvery-colored shelf fungus found growing on rotting vegetation in regions where the ambient temperature exceeds 40°C. Eaten cooked or raw, it has a rich, creamy texture and a somewhat subtle, smoky flavor. Highly prized as an exotic gourmet food in offworld markets, Silverbread is commonly harvested by fungus prospectors and sold in the Enaakan city markets. Rare. Range: hotlands.

**Shimmerfoot:** *Polydactylmycetes polychroma* is a common groundcover fungus which is highly prized in certain luxury item and novelty markets. It has the unusual property of giving off intense bioluminescence when crushed or disturbed, and many species exhibit startling color changes as well. Shimmerfoot is purchased by certain bioindustrial firms which use the organism to create living carpets of spectacular beauty. Merchants in Enaakan cities pay up to Cr 50 for one square-meter swatches which can be transplanted and grown. Special containers and care must be used to keep the fungus alive until it can be transplanted under controlled conditions. Once common throughout the temperate zones, shimmerfoot is today found only at considerable distances from human habitations, presumably because of intense over-harvesting. Rare. Range: temperate zones.

**Other Life Forms**

There are no native, land-dwelling animal life forms on Enaaka more highly evolved than insects. Most are harmless. Two deserve special mention.

**Crawlies:** Just as terrestrial lichens are symbiotic unions of a fungus and an algae, most "insects" on Enaaka are symbiotic unions of fungus and arthropods. Crawlies, *Piliaformes putrifactus*, are crawling zooforms reaching 3 centimeters in length. In appearance they are small masses of gray to gray-green fur easily mistaken for a bit of mold unless they are moving. Attracted to anything organic, alive or dead, they will bite exposed skin, raising a painful welt. Since they move rather slowly, they are a danger only when a character inadvertently puts an unprotected hand on one, or if a crawlie manages to get inside a vehicle, tent or building and bites while the character is sleeping.

The bite is dangerous because the crawlie's saliva transmits a fungal parasite, *Hemophagimycetium filimentus*, which reproduces inside the victim's blood stream. Over the course of several days, growth of the parasite is so rapid that it tends to clog arteries and veins in the host body, resulting in death by heart attack, stroke, or pulmonary embolism.

The organism can be treated at any major Enaakan medical center, but is usually fatal in the wilds.

Referee's Notes: Infected characters must make a survival roll of 13+ on 2D6 + End.

**Fuzzies:** Since insects are the highest form of life on Enaaka, the bipedal, shaggy-looking creatures known as "Fuzzies" are most certainly completely mythical, the stuff of stories used to frighten disobedient children. They are reputed to be man-sized, humanoid beings which live in packs deep in the Enaakan jungles, legendary beings akin to the Yeti of old Earth.

In fact, the Fuzzies are the descendents of early Vilani colonists on Enaaka, humans who acquired a disease similar to whitefuzz (see FUNGAL-RELATED DISEASE AND CONDITIONS below) which left their bodies completely covered by long, silky gray fungal "hair" which makes them look like shambling, fast-moving sloths.

The infection was beneficial in that it gave them immunity to most other fungal spores in the environment. The original victims passed on their infection — and the immunity — to their children. Small colonies of the creatures continue to live in remote Enaakan wilds. Over several thousands of years they have regressed completely to an almost pre-human level, and it is possible that the fungal infection has somehow interfered with their higher brain functions. They use no tools more complex than clubs, do not know fire, and seem to have no language beyond grunts and the eerie bays and howls heard in the night. They feed on various fungi, vegetation, and insects.

Extremely territorial in nature, they attack other colonies which might pose a threat. They perceive normal humans as other tribes trespassing in their territory, and will attack, using teeth, claws, and clubs.

Capture of one of these creatures could yield clues to the nature of the fungal toxins which afford protection against other fungus infections. By isolating this toxin, Pharmacon or other drug manufacturers could one day develop an inoculation which would protect Enaaka's inhabitants from deathfuzz, the Ghastly Death, and other natural hazards of the Enaakan environment.

**Referee's Notes:** For combat, Fuzzies are treated as human NPCs with stats of AA4211. They occur in groups (colonies) of 2D6 + 10 individuals. They cannot be surprised, and the fungus growing on them gives them superb natural camouflage.

## LIVING ON ENAAKA

### The Landscape

*"We reached the crest of the rise at dawn, though sight of the local sun is rare enough beneath Enaaka's leaden clouds and drizzle. The vista which greeted us was a fairy-land of color and eldritch form, of towering tree-mushrooms thirty meters high; of castles, ramparts, and parapets of multi-hued fungal tissue; of finger-thick 'grasses', rubbery in texture, which glowed and flashed in luminescent splendor with each step that we took.*

*"And in the center of it all, in the valley called A'kell by the natives, rested the golden, hemispherical dome of Aton."*

—Tomar Rasiaghuushi, *Pretorian Travels*
Star Press, Deneb, 1110

The Enaakan surface presents a truly alien landscape, one dominated not by trees but by thousands of varieties of fungus. Brown and gray colors tend to predominate, but many species are wildly and exotically colored, with every hue of the spectrum represented. Shimmerfoot, where it exists, creates spectacular color and light effects underfoot as the characters walk across it.

Day on Enaaka is generally a perpetual, twilight gray under heavy clouds, though the sun does appear occasionally, especially near the poles or at high altitudes. Night on Enaaka is never completely dark, though. A large number of native fungi are bioluminescent, and the nights — especially in the deep jungle — are eerily half-lit by a soft blue or green phosphorescence.

### Aton

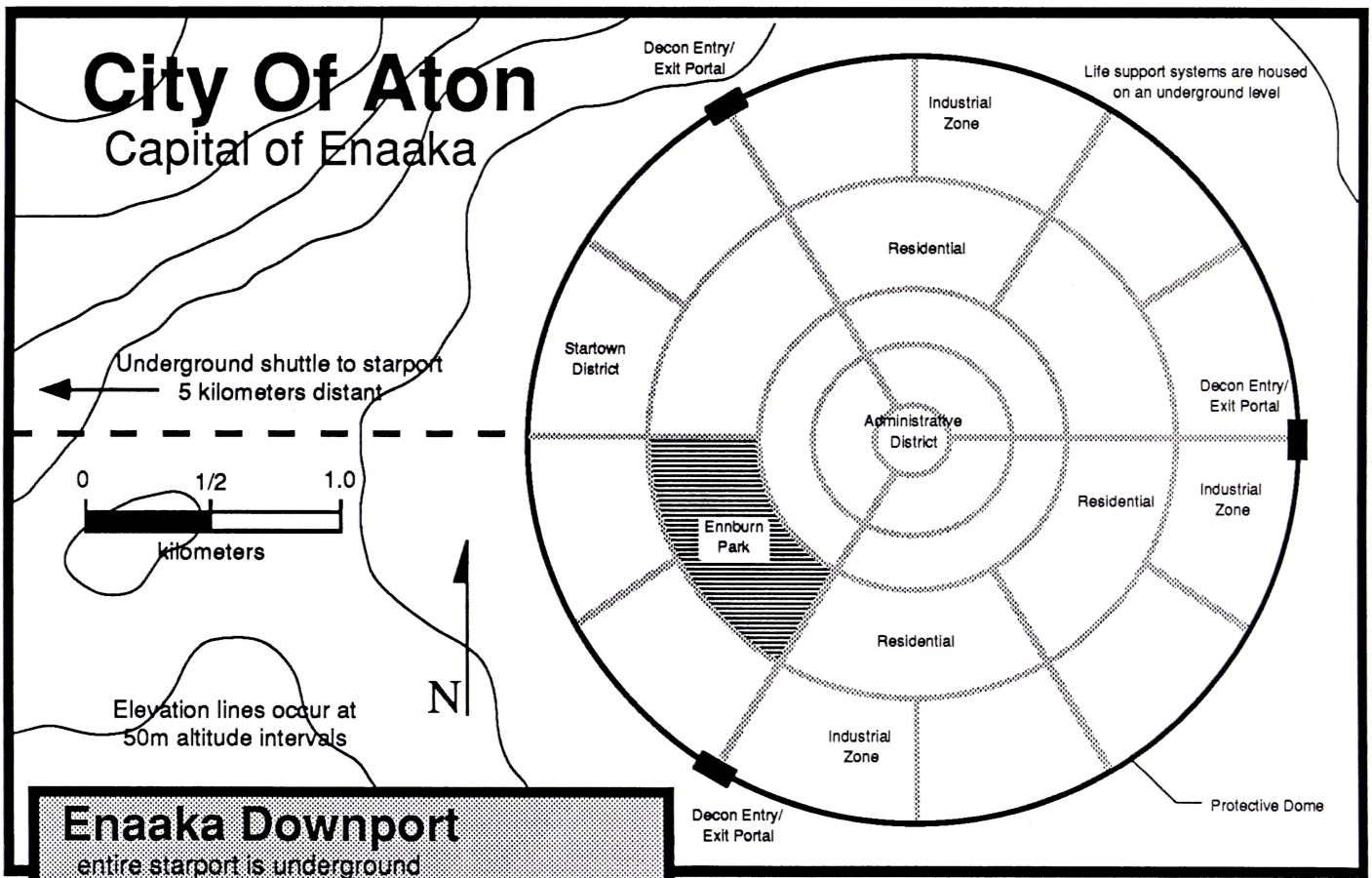
The largest city and principal cultural and trade center on Enaaka is the city Aton, located in the A'kell Valley of central Valpasin, a few kilometers from the Emerald Gulf and the warm waters of the Vasting Ocean. Unlike most cities on Enaaka, Aton exhibits an almost modern appearance, being constructed within the confines of a vast, three kilometer-wide, gold-hued dome.

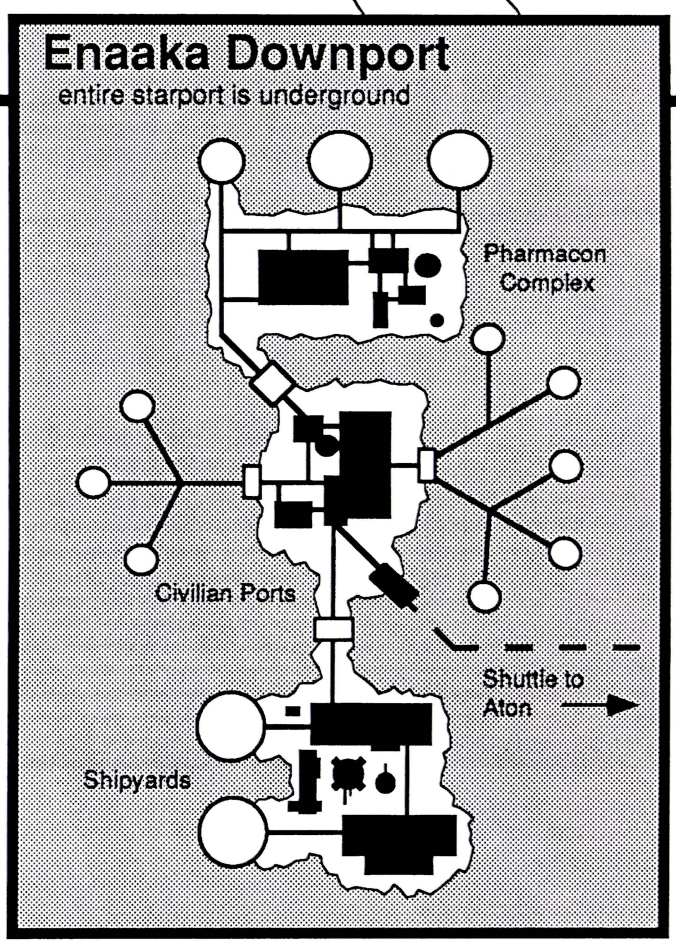
Aton began as a small local village, but heavy investment by Pharmacon, a locally-established pharmaceuticals research and manufacturing corporation, itself a subsidiary of SuSAG, brought unprecedented wealth and employment to the region. The influx of offworld capital led to an overall rise in the local tech level and standard of living. Products of TL7 or 8 are commonly available in Aton, while the B-class starport is a small but cosmopolitan enclave of Imperial sophistication.

Pharmacon remains the largest corporation in terms of trade and generated revenue on Enaaka. Pharmacon is also the planet's principal buyer of Enaakan Gold and other drug-related fungi. Though Pharmacon harvesters and explorer teams are constantly working in remote areas of the planet, they also trade with freelance prospectors, and generally pay top credit.

### The Cities

Enaaka has a population of 92,500,000. Because of the nature of the environment, all live in cities or enclaves of various sizes within the planet's two temperate zones. The largest city is the golden-domed planetary capital, Aton, (population 9,750,000) located on the northern continent of Valpasin. Aton Spaceport, a class B facility, is nearby. The Aton High Council is the ruling body on the planet, though the Council is widely perceived as a rather thin front for the




powerful Pharmacon Corporation board of directors, the real power on Enaaka.

Other cities are Akaaghu, (population 8,400,000) reputed to date back to the earliest Vilani colonies, and Vlest (pop. 4,000,000) in the shadow of the Euphoren Mountains.

**The People**

Enaakans, for the most part, are a friendly, courteous people, deeply marked by what they refer to as their intimate "relationship" to their world. With sudden death possible at any time, they regard their planet as an uncertain and extremely dangerous mistress, one who could turn on them at any time. Mistrustful of outsiders, disdainful of those who use elaborate protective devices or appear afraid of the Enaakan environment, their friendship and loyalty, once earned, are unquestionable.

Specific character types which the player characters might meet include:

**Bureaucrats:** Identical to bureaucrats everywhere, protective of their jobs and status, members of the impersonal bureaucracy which runs — more or less — the world under the direction of the Aton High Council. Unfortunately, it is impossible to do business on Enaaka without going through them. Licenses are required to buy equipment and protective gear, to mount expeditions into the wilds, to sell or export prospecting finds — all the usual bureaucratic rigmarole. A thriving smuggling business exists on Enaaka, designed to avoid the tariffs, taxes, and license fees which govern every aspect of business on the planet.

**Prospectors:** The majority of Enaakans are prospectors at one time or another in their lives. Even people with steady jobs elsewhere will turn to prospecting from time to time to make an extra few credits. Enaakan prospectors tend to be a rather rough-and-ready lot, ready for a brawl or a friendly game of cards or a quick gunfight over a disputed plot of silverbread.

**The Association:** An organization of prospectors banded together to win rights for prospectors and field workers exploited by Pharmacon and other major corporations on Enaaka. A secret organization built around code words and secret meeting places, it is difficult to penetrate without a referral from another member. The leaders are three prospectors, Rolan Thaspard, Cynthia Han, and Vaswell Gushuguuran. Rumors or bribes might lead the characters to an Aton bar called the *Goldenspore* if they wish to contact these three.

The Association could very easily become the nucleus of an armed rebellion against the government and off-world exploitation.

**Decontamination Squads:** The most serious-minded of Enaaka's several police and paramilitary organizations. Recruited for the most part by Pharmacon and other major industries, they are armed guards who ensure that decontamination procedures are carried out. They have the legal authority to kill anyone believed to have violated the strict quarantine laws, without trial or appeal. Called "dekkies" by the people, they are identified by their black protective suits and open show of weapons. They have access to a wide variety of decontamination gear, including robot handlers, scrubbing machines, and flame throwers.

They have been known to be used by their Pharmacon employers in roles other than guard duty and decontamination. Recently, a dekkie squad turned their weapons on a mob in Aton Square. Thirty people were killed. Enaaka could be on its way to becoming a police state, and the dekkies are the police.

**Corpies:** Short for Corporation Prospectors, these are men and women employed by Pharmacon and other drug companies on Enaaka to find and harvest useful fungi. Detested by freelance prospectors who see them as a threat to their way of life, they are generally aloof and are rarely encountered outside of their own bars or recreational places. Several corpie teams have been ambushed . . . or have simply disappeared.

By the same token, numerous enemies of Pharmacon have also vanished, and rumor has it that corpie death squads have been eliminating opposition to the company's policies. Some corpie teams in the wilds are heavily armed, and may be responsible for eliminating freelance prospectors who too openly oppose the established order.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### Protecting Yourself on Enaaka

All buildings and vehicles on Enaaka are sealed to protect their occupants from various spores or fungal contaminants. Humans venture outdoors on Enaaka only while wearing protective gear. The appearance, effectiveness, comfort, and cost of this gear can vary considerably. Basically, personal protection can be divided into three classes. See page 36.

### Decontamination

All public buildings on Enaaka have decontamination centers at each entrance. These resemble shower rooms. People entering the building from outside walk inside, stand under a blast of water treated with various decontamination chemicals for five minutes, then proceed to a locker area where their suits, masks, or other protective gear can be stored. Guards are on hand to ensure that proper decontamination procedures take place.

Sealed vehicles such as crawlers have similar facilities built into air locks, to prevent tracking fungal spores inside. Private homes have airlock-type shower facilities inside each entrance.

In the field, decontamination is not always possible. DeKon™ is a powder which kills most fungal spores on contact when dusted liberally on the body, inside clothing, and in boots and footwear.

### Vehicles

Transport outside the sealed cities and buildings on Enaaka is almost exclusively by crawler, large, tracked vehicles identical to the tracked vehicles described in various MegaTraveller sources. All have airlocks equipped with decontamination shower units.

Air travel on Enaaka is uncommon, partly because of the frequent storms, partly because a crashed aircraft offers little protection to surviving passengers in the jungle, while a broken-down crawler can maintain a secure environment. Travel at sea is by boat, the watercraft sealed against the atmosphere. Submarines have proven successful, especially for freight and passenger runs between the various continents.

## COMMERCIAL PROSPECTING

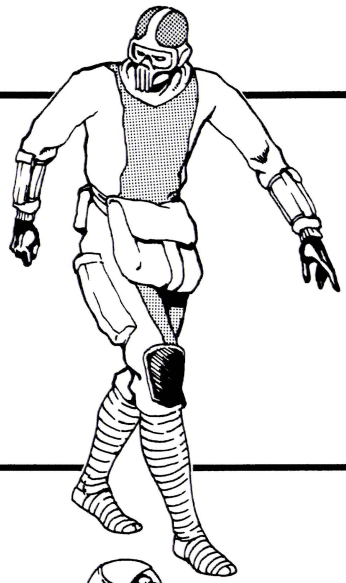
Most visitors to Enaaka come with the sole purpose of getting rich quick. A significant percentage of the planet's population makes its living by mushroom prospecting.

Prospectors may work alone or in small parties. Some have large investments in vehicles, environmental suits, and collecting gear; others have nothing but a cheap filter mask and a backpack with drop cloths and supplies. Some work as "scouts" for the pharmaceutical corporations and draw a salary, together with a commission on whatever they find over a particular credit value. Most prefer to freelance, collecting their finds and selling them in lots to the highest bidder.

All prospectors have one thing in common: without exception, they go armed. "No law beyond the five" is the popular saying on the world, where city laws are not enforced beyond five kilometers from the city boundary. Every year, hundreds of prospectors die in gunfights waged over a patch of valuable fungus discovered by two parties simultaneously. The common practice of locating a valuable fungus patch and returning periodically to "harvest" it leads to frequent violent encounters when the same patch is marked on the maps of more than one party. Various attempts to set up claims offices where fungus patches can be registered by a legal owner have always failed, largely because of the impossibility of enforcement.

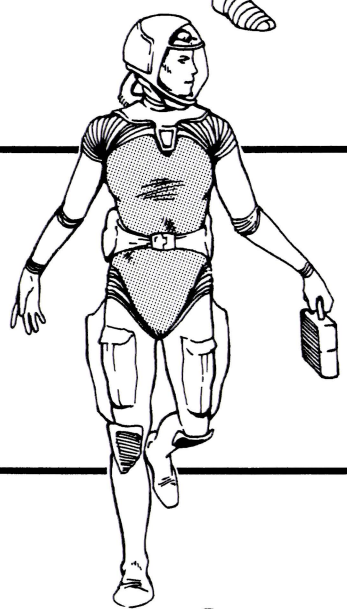
Some of the more valuable of Enaaka's organic treasures are listed below, together with the task descriptions for harvesting them.

**Enaakan Gold:** *Aurimycetes sp.*, several varieties of rare fungus resembling the terrestrial morel. Commonly called *golden morel* or *goldusters*, they are named for the color of



**Class 1:** Class 1 protection provides basic protection against air-born contaminants, and includes the types of equipment most commonly worn by Enaakan natives and prospectors. It consists of a face mask and filter unit to protect the eyes and mucus membranes from organisms such as *Pilimycetus*, and ordinary clothing treated to make it moisture-repellant. The cheapest versions consist of a simple filter mask and goggles.

Class 1 goggles and masks are available for free on a roll of 8+ at any building lock and vehicle. Prices range from Cr10 for a breathing mask and goggles to about Cr50 for a good one-piece filter mask. All clothing manufactured on Enaaka is water-repellant, and has elastic sleeves, cuffs, and neck to keep spores from attaching to the body. Gloves are not usually worn; frequent hand-washing is a necessity and lightweight rubber gloves are available.



**Class 2:** Class 2 protection consists of a body suit — sometimes called an E-suit — designed to completely protect the wearer from air-borne organisms, plus either a full face mask and filter unit or a lightweight, plastic bowl helmet. Available locally, it is generally worn by corporate, diplomatic or government officials, VIP visitors, and the upper levels of Enaakan society.

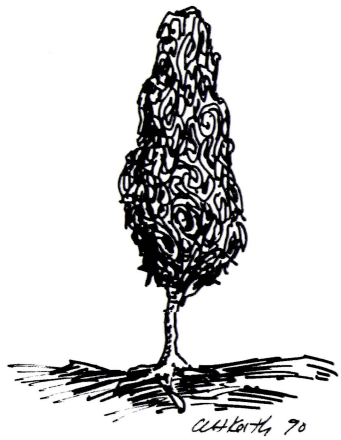
Class 2 gear costs from Cr40 for a lightweight "slickersuit" and mask to Cr500 for a stylish, comfortable suit with helmet. A self-contained portable life support system (PLSS) can be added (for an additional Cr250) to provide clean, cool air. If used with gloves, helmet, and backpack, there is a -1 penalty on the character's dexterity.

**Class 3:** Class 3 suits offer full head-to-toe protection from all air- or water-borne organisms, as well as complete air conditioned comfort. The backpack PLSS provides up to six hours of air, and environmental controls allow the wearer to set the suit to any desired temperature and humidity. Some visitors — especially those working within the equatorial regions — simply wear standard shipboard vacc suits, which serve admirably as class-3 garb.

While offering total environmental comfort and protection, there tends to be a distinct social barrier between visitors encumbered by off-world protective gear and the natives, who pride themselves on living on their world with a minimum of technological encumbrances.

Cost and dexterity penalties are the same as for vacc suits at various tech levels.

*Note:* Class 3 protection is not generally available locally, since vacc suit technology is generally beyond the abilities of local manufacturers. However, off-world corporations doing prospecting or organics research always have protective suits for their personnel, at tech levels ranging from 8 to 12. High tech protective suits can almost always be acquired from black market sources for their base price x 1D6.



their spores which resemble gold dust, and give the fruiting body its characteristic golden tint. The spores are prized by various pharmaceutical companies. One species has anticarcinogenic properties. Another is used in certain anagathic drugs.

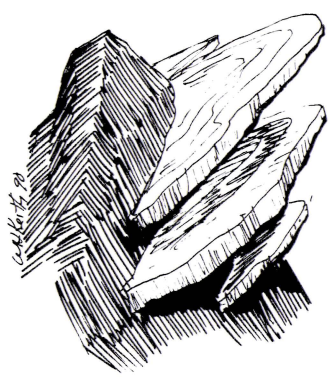
Pharmaceutical companies with Enaakan offices will pay 2D6 x Cr.1,000 per gram of Enaakan Gold spores. Offworld corporations dependent on trade with Enaaka to acquire the valuable "gold dust" will pay ten times this amount.

The spores are collected by finding a golden morel (see task below), carefully laying a plastic drop cloth beneath it, and gently tapping the morel head to shake the spores — a fine, golden powder — onto the cloth. One morel typically provides 2D6 x 10 milligrams of spore, though rare "bonanzas" yield 2D6 x 100 milligrams.

Alternatively, the entire morel can be wrapped and picked. This yields twice the weight in spores, but destroys the plant. Prospectors generally leave gold morels in place, keeping their locations closely-guarded secrets and returning at intervals to harvest them. Numerous deaths have resulted from gunfights waged over a plant which different parties approached at the same time. Once harvested, it takes 12 weeks for the morel to produce a new crop of spores (2D6-1 weeks if a known plant was harvested at an unknown time by unknown parties.)

Finding gold morel is a task, rolled once each day:

To find a gold morel in the Enaakan wilds:
Difficult, Hunting *or* Recon, Int, 2 hours
*Referee:* Exceptional success: bonanza yield. Failure: gold morel not found. Exceptional failure: morel found, but it has already been harvested by some other fungus prospector. Alternatively, a known morel has been picked by another prospector.



**Silverbread** *Argente apanis smythii* resembles terrestrial shelf-fungus, but does not have the same woody texture. Instead, it has a soft skin and creamy inner texture with a flavor which makes it much prized by gourmet food suppliers. Silverbread is picked and sold whole in city markets. The going price is Cr100 per kilogram.

Finding silverbread is a task, rolled once each day:

To find silverbread in the Enaakan wilds:
Difficult, Hunting or Recon, Int, 1 hour
*Referee:* Exceptional success: 1D6 x 10 kilograms located. Success: 1D6 kilos located. Failure or exceptional failure: no silverbread found.

Other fungus species offer financial inducement for expeditions into the Enaakan wilds, including the glowing carpets called shimmerfoot, and a host of fungi with gourmet or medicinal value. The referee should feel free to invent other fungi as she sees fit to either reward or threaten the players.

**FUNGAL-RELATED DISEASES AND CONDITIONS**

The following are a few of the more common health problems associated with the fungi of Enaaka.

**Predatory Infestation**

Several of the most deadly of Enaaka's fungi reproduce as spores which lodge on organic matter and grow – often at an astonishing rate. These are called predatory fungi because of the speed with which the host animal is overcome and devoured.

Any character who breaths unfiltered Enaakan air, loses his face mask, or is otherwise exposed to possible infection by airborne spores makes an Infection Roll on 2D6 immediately, and once every hour thereafter that he remains exposed. Possible infections include whitefuzz, deathfuzz, and the Ghastly Death.

**Whitefuzz**: *Pilimyceti bromlea* reproduces by means of spores which lodge and grow on moist organic surfaces such as the mucus membranes of eyes, nose, and throat. The infestation begins as tufts of fine, white fibers growing on the tongue and insides of the mouth and spreading — over a period of one to two days — to the throat, nasal passages, and eyes. Symptoms include the white fibers themselves which give the affected areas a fuzzy look, irritated or painful breathing, and itching of the eyes and gums.

After two days, the victim's physical condition begins breaking down, and tufts of white fuzz appear on the body, especially in moist areas such as underarms, thighs, and between the fingers and toes. Breathing becomes labored, and affected areas develop extremely painful urticaria and itching.

Recovery occurs spontaneously after two weeks, but the character will remain in a debilitated condition for years after the infection. In some cases, death by asphyxiation occurs.

**Referee's Notes:** If the Infection Roll is 11 (exactly) the character will develop whitefuzz symptoms 1D6 hours later.

After 12 hours, his Strength, Endurance, and Dexterity are all reduced to one-quarter, with fractions rounded up. The character must roll 15 or higher on a 2D6 + End roll to survive the disease. After two weeks, his condition returns to normal, but his Endurance remains *permanently* reduced by one half.

**Deathfuzz:** *Pilimyceti mansonei* is closely related to the organism responsible for the affliction called whitefuzz (above.) Some investigators, in fact, do not classify them as separate species, but list the deathfuzz organism as a more virulent strain of the same organism.

In any case, deathfuzz begins identically to whitefuzz. After one to two days, however, the patches of white fuzz which appear on the skin grow very quickly, covering the victim completely within as little as four to six hours. The condition is extremely painful and usually fatal.

**Referee's Notes:** The character will develop deathfuzz if the infection roll is 12 (exactly). The onset and early course of the disease is the same as for whitefuzz. However, the infected character must roll 20 on a 2D6 + End roll to survive. If he survives the disease, recovery is the same as for whitefuzz.

**The Ghastly Death:** *Rana morbiomycetii* is a (fortunately) rare spongiform mushroom occasionally encountered in the hotlands. While poisonous in itself, the rana fungi's spores are deadly. Once introduced onto living tissue, the spores extrude an acidic hyphae network which consumes the host within minutes. The victim is rapidly covered by a writhing mass of black-gray to purple fungal matter. Death is fast but extremely painful, the result of body tissues being digested by the acid and rapidly absorbed into the fungus structure. Typically, death occurs within one to two minutes, from blood and tissue loss, as well as from shock. The host body is completely dissolved within a few hours, with nothing remaining but bones and the shapeless, orange mass of the rana germinative body.

*Rana morbiomycetii* is encountered only in regions where the temperature remains above about 40° C, and is confined to the equatorial regions.

**Referee's Notes:** Characters will be infected by Ghastly Death if their Infection Roll is a 2 (exactly), but only if the exposure takes place within the equatorial zone. Death occurs automatically, as described above.

**Special Note:** Locals have learned how to manufacture spring-fired steel darts — called ghaster darts — containing a minute quantity of rana spores inside a glass capsule. The capsule is shattered by a sliding piston arm which slams forward on impact, releasing the deadly spores. The dart will penetrate ordinary protective clothing and class 2 E-suits. Death occurs within one to two minutes as the victim is consumed *inside* his protective suit.

The weapons are similar in most respects to body pistols, must be manually reloaded after each shot, and, with three rana-tipped darts, can be purchased (black market only) for Cr5,000. Also encountered occasionally are ghaster bottles, small vials containing a gram or more of rana spores. When shattered, the spores destroy any unprotected organism within five meters, and could contaminate (for example) a ship's or building's air recirculators. Death by ghaster darts or vials can occur at any temperature; if the temperature is below 40°C., however, the germinating body will die without producing new spores.

Gathering rana spores is a hazardous and expensive operation requiring special filter traps placed over germinating rana masses. Though strictly illegal, black market rana spores sell for as much as Cr3,000 per gram.

**Skin Infections**

Characters who habitually expose their skin to the environment — by not wearing gloves or protective clothing, for example, run the risk of contracting any of several unpleasant skin conditions.

Many natives habitually go into the wilds without such protection. All, sooner or later, contract scunge, and are later immune to it. Most seem to have developed a natural resistance to nakrot and crud. Visitors to Enaaka, however, should make an Infection Roll of 2D6 each day that parts of their body are exposed to the environment — through a tear in their protective clothing, for example, or if they go outside wearing the typical native garb of filter mask and waterproof clothing, leaving the skin of their hands, scalp, and neck exposed.

Possible infections are scunge, nakrot, and crud.

**Scunge:** A generic name for any of a wide variety of fungal skin infections similar to ringworm or athlete's foot. It most commonly occurs as red eruptions or blisters between fingers or toes, or on tender areas such as under arms or belly, in the scalp, or on the neck. The rash causes intense itching or burning and lasts for 1D6 weeks.

After that time, the rash vanishes, but it can recur at any time.

**Referee's Notes:** Scunge is contracted if the Infection Roll is 11 (exactly) and DeKon™ is not available. There is no cure, but various ointments available in any city or first aid kit provide relief from the itch. The character's Dex is reduced by 1 for the duration of the infection to reflect the effect of the itching.

**Nakrot:** *Putrescere humidiphlius* is mold-like organism which grows on any surface which is both organic and moist. In appearance it is a fuzzy, gray-green growth which spreads slowly. On humans, it tends to infest moist, dark regions, where it produces an intense, almost intolerable itching. Though not usually fatal, it is extremely unpleasant, and can cause extensive complications if it infests wounds or open sores.

**Referee's Notes:** Nakrot is contracted if the Infection Roll is 12 (exactly) and DeKon™ is not available. It will appear as described above 2D6 hours after exposure and spread slowly for the next 2 weeks. The character must roll 15 or higher on a survival roll of 2D6 + End. If he has an unhealed wound when he is infected — or if he is subsequently wounded during the 2 week infection period, he must make a survival roll once each day (using his new End) to avoid death.

The survival roll is not necessary if the character has access to an Enaakan city medical facility, which will administer medication to keep the rot under control.

**Crud:** A fungal skin condition similar to scunge. It appears as rough, red, irregular patches of skin on the face, neck, arms, or other parts of the body, beginning 2D6 hours after infection. It does not itch or otherwise affect the character and is not dangerous. It *looks* unpleasant, however, and the character may find that other characters and NPCs tend to avoid contact with him. It spreads slowly, and disappears after 2D6 weeks. It may, however, reappear at any time (Referee's option) — even many years after the character has left Enaaka, especially in hot weather or if the character becomes angry or upset.

**Referee's Notes:** Crud is contracted if the character's Infection Roll is 10 (exactly). No treatment is available and DeKon™ does not help. Its primary effect is psychological — on the *other* player characters who will tend to avoid what they will subconsciously believe is "catching."

**Poisoning**

Numerous species of fungus are poisonous when ingested. Only an expert mycologist can tell the poisonous from the edible species, and such experts are employed by most reputable food processing industries on Enaaka. Still, many people die each year from accidental ingestion of deadly fungi, "toadstools" in the popular lexicon.

Characters who eat mushrooms or other fungus which they gather themselves must make an immediate Infection Roll of 2D6 + Int. On a roll of 15 they will suffer the effects of poisoning.

The referee should choose one of the following types of poisoning, depending on the situation which led up to the incident (i.e., was he eating phycetta or raw silverbread.)

**Droalanga:** A highly toxic mushroom sometimes confused with the edible phycetta. Cooking does not destroy the toxin. Symptoms include nausea and vomiting, headaches, and cold chills within minutes of ingestion. An antidote exists, available in most cities and surface medical facilities on the planet.
**Referee's Notes:** Survival on 15+ on 2D6 + End. Character remains unconscious for 2D6 hours if he survives. Administering an antidote within 1D6 hours of ingestion will save him.

**Carathesin:** A powerful hallucinogenic, the result of a parasitic fungus which sometimes infests silverbread. It is destroyed by cooking, but may affect people who eat silverbread raw.
**Referee's Notes:** The affected character experiences visual, auditory, and tactile hallucinations for 1D6 hours. Details are left to the referee's imagination, but the affected character will become violently paranoid, convinced that others are trying to kill him. He may run into the wilds without wearing mask or E-suit.

**Taskimycetean Poisoning:** *Taskimycetes* is a class of fungus which releases microscopic spores deadly to humans in minute quantities. Traces of taskimycetean spores may be found on various edible fungi, including moldbread, phycetta and silverbread. Cooking the fungus destroys the taskimycetean toxins, but deaths have been reported as a result of improper cooking, or where the edible fungus is served raw.

Symptoms include anoxia, choking, purple discoloration about the eyes and mouth, vomiting, and a sharp tingling in the fingers and toes. Death by asphyxiation usually occurs within five minutes.
**Referee's Notes:** Survival on 18+ on 2D6 + End.
**Special Note:** A distillate of the primary toxin, locally called *anslit*, has been used more than once in murders and assassinations, and the toxin has considerable commercial value for that reason alone. The Archduke of Tripolis was reportedly murdered in 913 by the administration of a drop of anslit administered in his salad dressing.

## ADVENTURES ON THE FUNGUS PLANET

### Quest

The simplest Enaakan adventure begins with the player characters out of luck on Enaaka. Needing money to repair or refuel their spaceship, or to buy passage off-world, they are forced to turn to prospecting in order to raise the money they need.

Several courses are open to them. If they have money enough, they can rent a crawler and buy supplies. If they are completely broke, they might sign on with Enaakan Exploratory or some other company which recruits prospectors to explore the Enaakan wilderness and search for useful or commercially valuable fungus species.

The course of the adventure is up to the referee. The dangers faced by prospectors on Enaaka include predatory fungi, accidents resulting in torn E-suits or contaminated environments, marauding bandits, and the semi-mythical Fuzzies.

**Referee's Information:** The characters will need to make a spectacular strike — such as a bonanza of Enaakan Gold — to earn the money they need. Alternatively, they can work as prospectors long enough to become familiar with the environment, then find themselves caught up in one of the following adventures instead.

### Exploration

Much of Enaaka is still unknown. What *is* known is that the planet's wealth of fungi species offer spectacular potential for new drugs, chemicals, and other products yet undreamed-of. Anti-cancer and anti-aging drugs have already been developed from two related fungus species; what other treasures might be waiting to be discovered in the humid mushroom jungles of Enaaka's equatorial zone?

The characters are approached by Jason Hulachek of Enaaka Exploratory, a subsidiary of Pharmacon. The corporation will pay each of them Cr20 per day to conduct a survey of the Chloan Equatorial, a vast, largely unexplored stretch of desert, mountain, and jungle in the heart of Enaaka's largest equatorial continent. In addition, they will receive a bonus for any new species which Pharmacon decides is worth further development.

Accompanying them will be Dr. Angelina Rutter, a beautiful and respected mycologist and an expert on Enaakan species. Also available is a computer program loaded with details on all of Enaaka's classified species, and a portable biochemical lab for on-the-spot analysis. Dr. Rutter will be the referee's voice in determining when new finds are made and what their potential value to the company might be.
**Referee's Information:** This can be played as a straightforward exploration scenario. The land the characters will be exploring is hot, rugged, and alien. Possible hazards along the way include new types of predatory fungus, bandit marauders, and Fuzzies.

Discoveries and rewards — all made at the referee's discretion — include a bonanza find of Enaakan Gold; an unknown species of mushroom which Dr. Rutter says shows promising biological similarities to *Aurimycetes*; and a lost Vilani city.

The city, long ago swallowed by the mushroom jungle, is a ruin, built by Enaaka's first Vilani colonists thousands of years ago. The Fuzzies are descendents of these early colonists, now completely adapted to life in Enaaka's jungles.

Still another possibility is that the characters have been asked to verify the existence of the Fuzzies, and, if possible, to bring a live specimen back to Aton. Study of this specimen could lead to the development of drugs which will offer protection against Enaakan spores, a discovery of fantastic commercial value.

If the referee desires to add a more complicated twist, additional enemies can appear in the form of either Pharmacon or Association heavies, and the adventure can be linked with the Mercenary-oriented adventure, described below.

- If the Association is being presented as the bad guys in the story, the exploration party can be attacked by Association guerrillas intent on capturing Doctor Rutter and holding her for ransom. The player characters will find themselves forced to mount a military operation to rescue the doctor — if only because they need her to get back to civilization.
- If, on the other hand, Pharmacon is the enemy, the attack is carried out by corpie thugs. Doctor Rutter, it will be learned, has stored information harmful to Pharmacon's

interests offworld within her computer library program, and has been looking for a way to safeguard it until she can smuggle it off-planet. Once she is convinced that the player characters are not corporate spies, she may approach them to win their help in escaping Enaaka. The entire expedition was designed to get her out of the way, she explains, so that she can be quietly eliminated — and the player characters.

Her information, delivered to certain government officials on Deneb, will end Pharmacon's predatory rule of Enaaka. The player characters will have to fight off corporation assassins, reach a spaceport, and contrive to get off-world.

Involving Pharmacon or the Association in this way could allow the adventure to be combined with the story line developed under Mercenary, below.

**Mercenary**

Pharmacon Corporation, the largest single corporate entity on Enaaka, has found itself facing a growing threat during the past several months. Explorer teams have been ambushed and wiped out, corporation vehicles destroyed, and three members of the board have been assassinated . . . one in a rather gruesomely spectacular way, on an in-dome street in Aton by a vial of Ghastly Death. (Decontamination squads were able to localize and sterilize the infestation before it had a chance to spread, but the incident three weeks ago still has Aton and other Enaakan cities in an uproar.)

Company officials believe the attacks are the work of a freelance prospectors' guild called the Association. The characters are approached by Norris Spinar, deputy chief of security for Pharmacon. He offers them Cr10,000 each per month, plus expenses and equipment (within reason), if they will take on a potentially dangerous task. Since they are new to Enaaka and therefore unknown to the Association, they have a chance to infiltrate the organization in order to learn who is sabotaging Pharmacon's operations.

Particularly suspect are three of the Association's principal leaders, Rolan Thaspard, Cynthia Han, and Vaswell Gushuguuran. Pharmacon will pay well if these three can be found and arrested or killed.

**Referee's Information:** The referee can develop this adventure along either of two directions. Details are left to her.

• The player characters could decide that Pharmacon is the real villain in the story. The huge company, itself run by the megacorporation SuSAG, dominates the economic life on Enaaka, and has been working to squeeze out the independent prospectors for a long time. Evidence can be found — through conversations with locals, interviewing eye-witnesses, investigating various records — that Pharmacon agents have been deliberately planting information to discredit the Association, to keep them weak and divided. The incident with the Ghastly Death was in fact *staged* by Spinar and his men — the victim was a corporate officer opposed to Pharmacon's policies — solely to convince the population at large that the Association members are irrational and homicidal.

• Alternatively, the players may discover that the Association is a terrorist organization bent on destroying everything that Pharmacon has built on Enaaka over the years and winning power for itself. It was the corporation which was responsible for developing the planet's potential, after all, and if there are grievances among the workers, negotiations and peaceful arbitration are the way to settle them, not risking a city's population to the effects of the Ghastly Death!

Whether the player characters take the side of the Association or the Corporation, their military experience will be in great demand. An anti-Association scenario would have them hunting down rebel bands in the dangerous wilds of Enaaka; an anti-Pharmacon scenario would pit them against well-armed dekkie and mercenary units in the pay of the all-powerful corporation.

**CONCLUSION**

Enaaka offers possibilities for many other adventures besides these, their variety limited only by the referee's imagination. On-going MegaTraveller campaigns could involve the planet in the politics of the struggling Domain, as rival Imperial or Vargr forces seize the planet in search of rumored stockpiles of valuable drugs, or because a rare hypnotic manufactured from an Enaakan mushroom could hold the key to a powerful truth serum. Pharmacon could figure prominently in anti-Norris intrigue across the Deneb Sector as they use credits from their Enaakan operation to build a power base against the Domain of Deneb. A spacecraft carrying important secrets or personnel could crash in a remote part of the jungle, and the characters are asked to mount an expedition to recover it.

Finally, Enaaka offers an interesting piece of background for a player character as a homeworld. A character from this planet would have an unusual knowledge of pharmacology and certain drugs, would have experience living and working in hostile ecologies — especially jungles — and would know about E-suits and the protective measures needed to avoid contamination in radiation- or bio-contaminated environments. He could even carry with him a visible piece of his personal history: that ugly red rash which flares up on the side of his face when he is angry or excited. The after effects of an old crud infection would go a long way toward explaining the character's social level of 2.

Enaaka: it's not just a world. It's an *adventure*!

**INTERESTING MACROBIOLOGIC LIFEFORMS**

The following is a summary of the larger fungal and animal life forms found on Enaaka. This list barely begins to scratch the surface as far as the diversity of forms on the planet. Referees are encouraged to develop their own species as required during play.

**Hotlands:**
***Fungal Forms–***
Tree Mushrooms (very common)
Carpet Sponge (very common)
Moldbread (very common)
Silverbread (rare)
Enaakan Gold (very rare — Valpasin Hotlands only)
***Animal Forms–***
Crawlies (common)

**Temperate Zones:**
***Fungal Forms–***
Tree Mushrooms (very common)
Carpet Sponge (very common)
Moldbread (very common)
Physetta (common)
Droalanga (common)
Shimmerfoot (rare)
***Animal Forms–***
Crawlies (common)
Fuzzies (very rare)

**Polar Regions:**
***Fungal Forms–***
Carpet Sponge (common)
***Animal Forms–***
Crawlies (common)

# Enaaka

**Enaaka/Pretoria 0203 B777786-6 Ag 922 Dd F5V**
**Primary:** Tranis, Spectral Class F5V. Mass: 1.3. Stellar Diameter: 1.4. Luminosity: 3.5.
**Enaaka:** Mean Orbital Radius 239.3 million km. (1.6 A.U.). Orbital Period 1.675 years (1y 246d 13h 3m 22s). Orbital Eccentricity 0.005. Diameter 11,992 km. Density 0.96. Mass: 0.643. Surface Gravity 0.84 G. Rotation Period 25 h 16m 13.3s. Axial Inclination: 01° 05' 14". Energy absorption 0.55. No natural satellites. Hydrographic Percentage 71%. Atmospheric pressure 0.95. Composition Oxygen-Nitrogen mix. Mean Surface Temperature 39° C. Native Life. Total population 92.5 million. Primary cities–Aton, 9.75 million; Akaaghu, 8.4 million; Vlest, 4 million. Government is a civil service beauracracy. Tech level–high common 6, low common 6. Primary resources– agricultural, agriproducts, pharmecuticals.

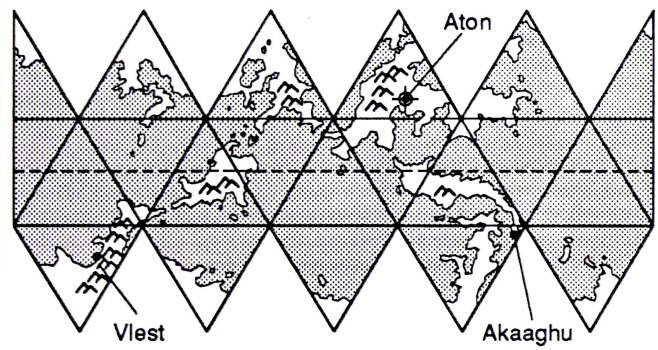
Enaaka can best be characterized as a world where the evolutionary race was won millions of years ago by fungi. Discounting microorganisms, over seventy percent of Enaaka's terrestrial lifeforms fall under the broad classification of *Enaakimycetes:* Enaakan Fungi. Enaaka is, in fact, sometimes popularly referred to as "the Fungus Planet."

Though the Enaakan ecology is dominated by fungi, non-fungal forms do exist. Most exist in close symbiosis with the fungi. Non-fungal forms in fact are necessary to the ecology; photosynthetic plants such as marine alga produce the oxygen in the atmosphere, and sugar-from-sunlight forms the base of the planet's ecological pyramid.

Fungal forms are relatively rare in Enaaka's oceans, but little is known about the planet's marine species as yet. Certain piscoids, crustaceans, and sea algas are important to the local economy as food, and "fish" and "seaweed-harvesting" craft operate out of all of the planet's coastal seaports.

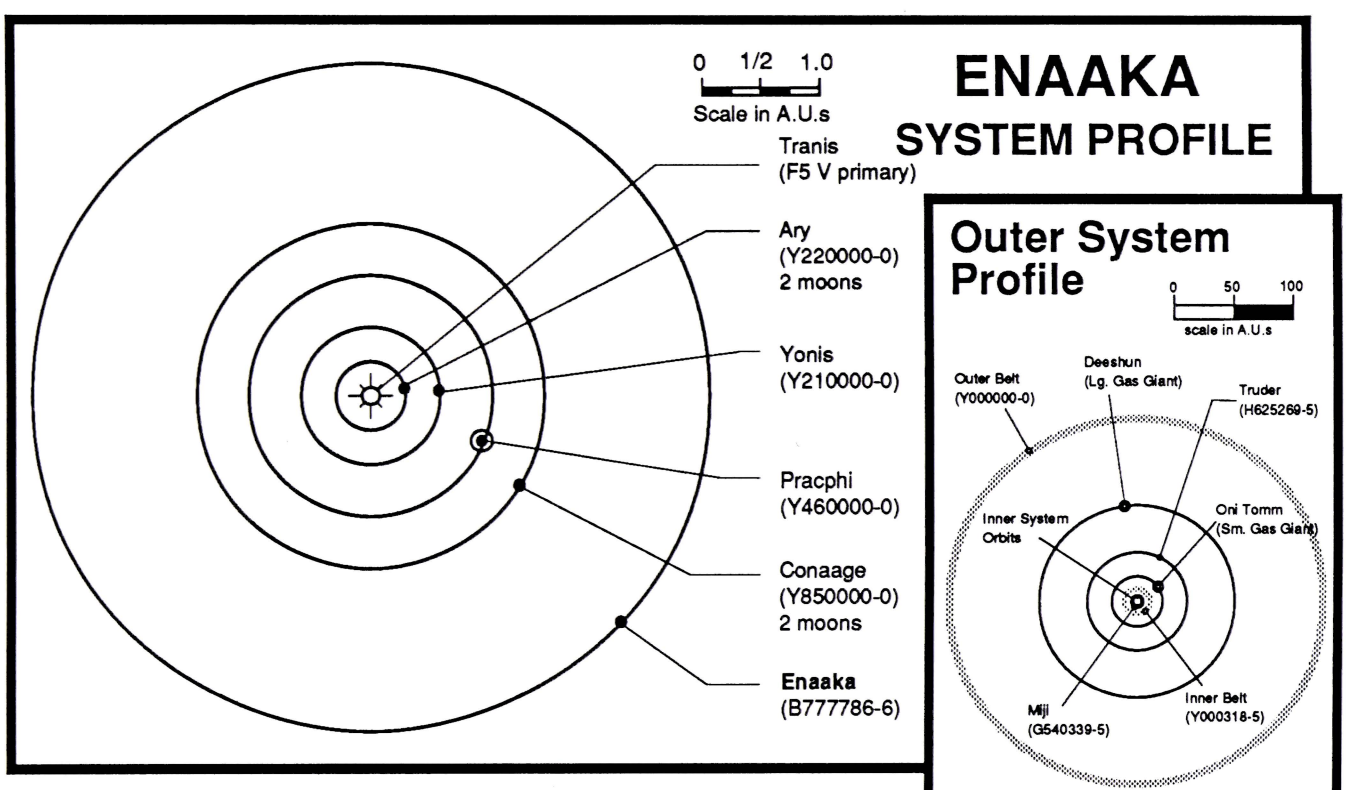
Enaakan fungi represent both the world's greatest danger and potential. Scores of fungus-related conditions and diseases exist, many of them fatal, some spectacularly so. Human enterprise on Enaaka is primarily concerned with the harvest and processing of certain types of fungus valued for their pharmacological or gourmet commercial worth.

The largest city and principal cultural and trade center on Enaaka is the city Aton, located in the A'kell Valley of central Valpasin. Unlike most cities on Enaaka, Aton exhibits an almost modern appearance, being constructed within the confines of a vast, three kilometer-wide, gold-hued dome. Aton began as a small local village, but heavy investment by Pharmacon, a locally-established pharmaceuticals research and manufacturing corporation, brought unprecedented wealth and employment to the region.



**Enaaka World Map**

Enaakans are deeply marked by what they refer to as their intimate "relationship" to their world. Mistrustful of outsiders, disdainful of those who use elaborate protective devices or appear afraid of the Enaakan environment, their friendship and loyalty, once earned, are unquestionable.



# NORRIS INTERVIEW

**A DENEB DOSSIERS SPECIAL:** *by Mark Shigulii, AAB Special Correspondent*

*Last year, as Norris Aella Aledon, the Archduke of the Domain of Deneb, toured the trailing worlds, he met with visiting Vilani journalist, Mark Shigulii. Shigulii was part of a state-sponsored fact-finding team sent through Corridor by the RVE. Beyond diplomatic responsibilities, their mission was to assess the situation in the Domain first-hand by visiting selected worlds and officials.*

*The meeting with Norris was not planned. As news of his fleet reached the RVE team, arrangements were hastily made for a rendezvous. When the two parties met, the Archduke spent 45 minutes in an open question and answer session. After a brief lunch, the portly leader invited Shigulii back aboard his flagship where the two men spent three hours in conversation.*

*As AAB correspondent to the Domain-area during the Fifth Frontier War, Shigulii is no stranger to Norris. What follows is an abbreviated text from that three-hour discussion, as Mark Shigulii tries shed some light on the personality and goals behind the Domain's tireless noble leader.*

**Mark Shigulii (MS):** Well, sir. I certainly am pleased to have stumbled into this opportunity to meet with you.

**Norris Aledon (NA):** I'd say it's a bit more of a surprise for me. We don't get many civilian visitors from the core-regions these days — let alone anyone I *know*.

**MS:** (chuckles) Needless to say, the situation has changed drastically in the past decade. For over three years, now, you've been isolated from the Imperial core by the Vargr incursions in the Corridor sector. Your stated position since the time of isolation has been one of loyalty to the Imperium, but with the reported chaos tearing apart the heart of the Empire, what does your stand really mean?

**NA:** "Cleon's Imperium". *Our* Imperium has been the beacon of enlightenment and technology for more than a thousand years. It was Cleon who was able to bring form out of the chaos that was the Long Night, and to re-establish a truly viable interstellar empire. Somewhere over that thousand years, some people have lost sight of the basic fact: maintaining an empire is hard work. It requires a constant guard against any number of dangers.

I believe firmly and strongly in the Imperium. It transcends any one individual, even the Emperor. Without the empire, we are a sea of individual planets at the mercy of any forces that come along. With the empire, we stand strong against adversity. Even adversity from within.

One of the reasons we've fallen into such an abyss — and I'm speaking primarily of the Imperial core — is that we've lost sight of the ideology. The nobility in the Moot and possibly the Emperor himself have forgotten what the Imperium really *means*. They've allowed their own short-sighted goals to get in the way of their higher and greater responsibility.

It seems to me that there were many opportunities missed to stabilize the problems at the core. Missed because certain individuals were more interested in trying to take advantage of a situation in flux.

**MS:** So are you saying that you feel Lucan is in the wrong? That he's taken the wrong route?

**NA:** No, that's not what I'm saying. The problem runs deeper than any one person. If I had to nail it down, I'd say the problem is more with members of the nobility at large. The core was starting to become corrupt. Dulinor and his actions were a symptom of a greater disease.

A noble, no matter his rank and position, has a tremendous amount of responsibility on his shoulders — responsibility to uphold the *ideal* of the Imperium. It's the loss of that ideal, in the minds of many high-ranking nobles in the core, which has brought us into these desperate times.

**MS:** And you see this as a localized problem? You don't think this loss of ideal has spread to the area of the Domain of Deneb?

**NA:** It'd be unrealistic to say it hadn't. It'd also be unrealistic to say that this underlying selfishness hasn't always been there. But I'd say that it had become critically unbalanced in the core. It's only human to consider your own self-interests — but a noble has to be more than human, sometimes. That is why he has been put in the position he is in.

**MS:** So then, you're suggesting that the nobles of the Domain are... more "well-balanced"?

**NA:** If you need a buzz-word, I guess that'll do. Don't get me wrong. I haven't lost faith in the Imperial nobility. To do that is to lose faith in the Imperium. I just think that there were some poor judgements made and that the political atmosphere of the core was promoting those directions.

**MS:** Well, sir. Doesn't that then lead us back to Strephon as the problem?

**NA:** No. Well, yes and no. Like any leader, he had goals. Goals designed to better conditions for those whom he led. I think his directions and ideologies were right and solid to him. The problem arises when the goals are wrongly interpreted by individuals disconnected from the leader. That was the problem. Strephon was a great leader, but few understood the subtlety of his actions.

In the case of Dulinor, he may have understood, but he didn't have the patience to see the effect. With the reestablishment of domain-level government, the Emperor was heading in just the direction Dulinor wanted to go — power on a more meaningful level to its constituent worlds.

But Dulinor didn't want to wait. He didn't have the foresight to understand painless change, so he tried a painful shortcut...

**MS:** If I may, sir? It makes it sound like Dulinor acted in a rash manner, yet he's publicly stated that it's a decision he took years to make.

**NA:** Years? Not enough. Strephon was a man who acted over years. I suspect Dulinor made up his mind as to how to act, then took years to find the proper opening to strike.

**MS:** It seems that your timely appointment as Archduke of he Domain or Deneb was most fortuitous. How have the pressures of running an independent Domain, isolated from the Imperium, changed your view of the position? Are you still comfortable with it?

**NA:** I don't know that I've ever *been* comfortable with it. As I said before, being a governing noble is more of a responsibility than a reward. I spent my childhood free from

that mantle. I was raised with a sense of responsibility directed on a smaller scale — I certainly never expected to be overseeing four sectors!

I don't know, maybe that's a blessing in disguise. Some people spend their whole lives playing the political games — jockeying for position. I just found myself thrust into situations where I was forced to take the reins. First with the death of my brother and father, leaving me as subsector Duke. Then, during the war, as Santanocheev's mismanagement threatened the Marches, I was the only one who was really in a position to make a difference. After that, Strephon's appointment of me to Archduke. It just all built up. As an Imperial noble, my responsibility is to do my appointed job to the best of my abilities, and that's just what I've been doing — but my jobs keep getting bigger and bigger (Norris grins).

**MS:** Couldn't you have turned down the Archduke appointment, if you didn't want the responsibility?

**NA:** (pauses) Yes. I could have, but I didn't for one main reason. The Emperor wanted me in that position. I had great respect for Strephon's wisdom. Though I may not have immediately seen the rationale in all his actions, I knew it was there.

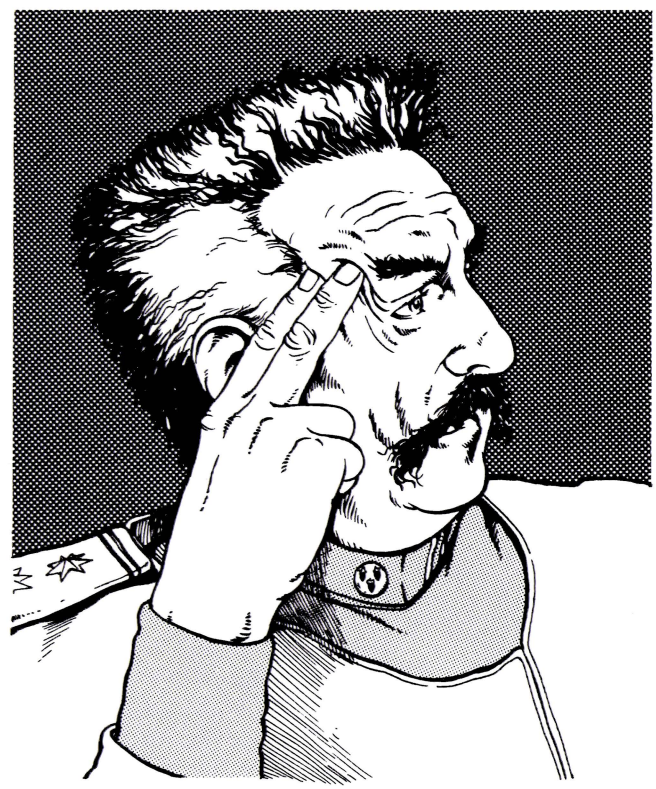
He knew me as well as any man could from over 500 lightyears away. If he thought I was the best choice, I was not about to contradict him.

**MS:** With the crisis of the Imperium's failure to smoothly find a successor to the throne still fresh in our memories, I'd like to ask what plans have been made in the unlikely event of your demise?

**NA:** There is always a succession plan in place for top officials of the government. The Domain of Deneb is governed by a bureaucracy — and I use that word in a positive sense– that understands and works actively to accomplish the single goal of survival of the Domain. It works at my direction, just as I work at the Emperor's direction, and just as he works at the direction of the people.

If I were to die tomorrow, the bureaucracy would easily continue my policies, at least until they were changed by my successor.

But now we get to the heart of your question... who will my successor be? There has been some discussion in recent months of the Duchess Delphine and her opposition to me on matters of basic policy. Delphine is a hard-working, loyal noble with an excellent grasp of routine matters of government. But the line of succession passes through me to my true-daughter, Seldrian, before it passes to Delphine. The government fully expects that I would be succeeded by my true-daughter rather than by another line.



**"I believe firmly and strongly in the Imperium. It transcends any one individual, even the Emperor."**

**MS:** I hear that Delphine has been ill these past few months. She's, what, 130?

**NA:** I believe she just celebrated her 140th birthday.

**MS:** Oh. Well, she may not be in the picture that much longer then?

**NA:** I don't have the details on her current medical condition, but I'd say that's not an entirely unrealistic assumption. However, contrary to popular opinion, it's not an event I'm looking forward to. Though the Matriarch's strong personal will can sometimes go against the current I'm sailing down, the Domain remains intact from the strength of nobility of her ilk.

**MS:** Getting back to the successor question for a second, is there any specific reason you've remained unmarried.

**NA:** Not aside from the obvious ones. I've never met anyone who I felt strongly enough towards to make that kind of commitment and I've never had the time to step up the search. (Norris grins)

I had Seldrian because it became apparent that such an action was my duty. She was the most expeditious route to providing an heir to the Aledon holdings. Willam, my brother, died before he was married, so Seldrian is currently the sole heir.

**MS:** Recently, you've been coming under some fire with regards to your stand on psionics. Some have criticized you for having too much tolerance for psionics within the Domain — your intervention in the Gakkisaa case, for example. Some have even gone so far as to make claims that you yourself or your seneschal are psionic!

**NA:** (Norris chuckles)

**MS:** What's your answer to these accusations and how would you state your position?

**NA:** I would never want to *be* psionic. You and I both know that within our society, psionic talent is a handicap that must be carefully hidden. Those who have such talents cannot find even elementary training in their abilities, and they remain latent — and thus safely suppressed — in those few citizens who have them.

But I also believe in a cosmopolitan empire where each individual is judged on his or her or its own merits. Aslan have a place, as do many others. Even — and despite current unpleasantnesses — Vargr have a place. Even psionic persons have a place: not to use their talents, but simply to live out their lives peaceably.

The Gakkisaa case was my opportunity to intervene on the part of a latent psionic with undeveloped talents who was discovered through routine testing. Enrii Gakkisaa never operated as a psionic, never read minds, never teleported. Indeed, he was severely shaken to discover that he had even a latent talent. But proof of undeveloped psionic

talent is not enough, or should not be enough, to impose criminal penalties on a citizen who has committed no other crime.

**MS:** What about the use of psionics outside the Domain? How do you feel about that?

**NA:** How I feel is irrelevant. No Imperial noble has the right to dictate extra-Imperial policy. I suspect you're specifically hinting at the Zhodani?

**MS:** Well, yes. They are the obvious subject, though not the only one.

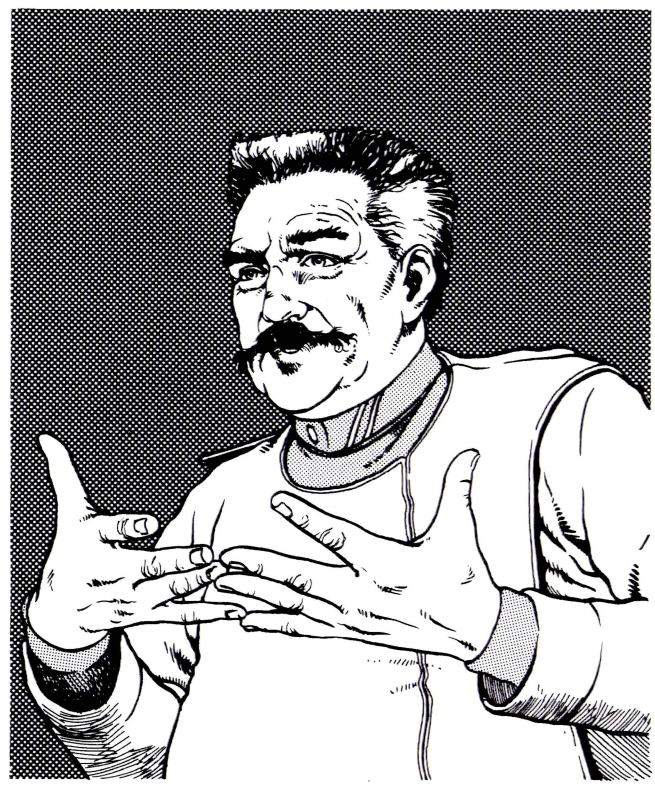
**NA:** Zhodani culture has its very roots in the use of psionics. To deny them its use in their society — to even suggest it — is completely unfair to them. However, I don't think it's unfair to expect the courtesy of limiting their use while they are officially visiting in the Domain. It's all a matter of respect and understanding.

**MS:** Probably one of your greatest victories has been the stabilization of relations with the Zhodani Consulate. What do you attribute that success to? Anything specific?

**NA:** The conflict with the Zhodani is centuries old. It dates from the first contacts between Imperial and Zhodani. The stalemate at the end of the Fifth Frontier War has certainly helped stabilize our borders with the Consulate. But I think there is a deeper reason; one rooted in their own psionic powers.

They — some of them — have an ability to read minds and personalities. And I am certain they have read mine many times. When they do, they can sense the absolute resolve that our borders with the Consulate will remain strong and solid. When they couple that with the fact that I was the commander of the forces which caught them in the Battle of Rhylanor, they know where we will draw the line.

**...Corridor will again connect us with the central regions, but a quick resolution is not in sight."**



As a matter of fact, I think that an attack by the Zhodani on the Marches could well consolidate the rest of the Imperium behind us and end the Rebellion. They sense that too, and don't dare make a move.

Care for one? *(Norris offers a feesle stick².)*

**MS:** Certainly one of the issues of most concern to your citizens today — especially those in the rimward extents — is the Aslan incursions. You seem to be caught in the crossfire of the subject. The pro-Aslan minority has been accusing you of unrealistic and ethnocentric goals by blocking the Aorlakht's [Aslan New Lords] acquisitions of unused, unclaimed territory, while the vast anti-Aslan sentiment feels you're not giving the problem all the support it requires. They feel you've been needlessly surrendering the Domain's untapped, vital resources.

In light of these criticisms, how would you summarize your goals and actions in dealing with the Aslan situation?

**NA:** As I said before, strong action and quick responses are the popular answers to modern problems. Who knows, maybe it comes from too many holo entertainment episodes? When a problem is presented in just a few minutes and then heroically solved in under half an hour, then it becomes relatively easy to think of handling the real world on the same terms. My experience in government is that such approaches just won't work.

Many, many people wish that we could return to the days before Strephon's Death, and that a calm, peaceful Imperium ruled the stars again. Those days are not yet to be for many more years.

Those same people wish that we could drive off the Aslan in a single grand attack, much like the Zhodani were driven off in the Battle of Rhylanor in the last war. Those solutions to problems are not to be. The Battle of Rhylanor was the exception, not the rule. Reality rarely presents us with simple, timely outs.

Like it or not, the Aslan who are now entering the Imperium are destined to be citizens and co-equals to all of us already here. The struggle to deny them the New Lands — as they themselves call them — would end only in a genocidal war that I do not want to wage, and that no one could win.

Instead, the future of the Aslan in the Imperium depends on careful, detailed negotiation which is always backed by credible shows of force and strength. What I ask of the Domain's people is are time, patience, and their support. An out-and-out war is the last thing the Domain needs.

**MS:** Rumors have been circulating regarding plans for a strategic thrust by naval forces to attempt to recapture the Corridor Depot. Are these rumors true and is that a realistic goal? If I'm not mistaken, your naval forces are already stretched quite thin and to allocate even a portion of our strength to such a potentially costly operation seems foolhardy — though such a successful operation would certainly make my trip home much easier...

**NA:** Once again, I think the voices operating behind this issue are of the rash-thinking school. As you may know, I spent two years of my naval career stationed at Corridor Depot. I, more than most, am aware of how critical the Depot was to maintaining the power of the Corridor fleet. However, it has been under Glory [of Taarskoerzn ] control for more than two years now. I think many of its valuable assets are long gone and its strategic position is no longer relevant.

If Corridor is to be retaken, the campaign must be a well-planned and well-executed operation. And frankly, I see much greater priorities for our forces closer to home. I am, however, in contact with elements of the Imperial

government and your own. I foresee the day when a two-front operation to clear the entire Corridor will again connect us with the central regions, but a quick resolution is not in sight.

**MS:** With the incredible workload and responsibility you're bearing these days, what do you do to unwind? To get away from it all.

**NA:** Not much. At least, not as much as I'd like to. I haven't had a chance to go hunting for a few years now. I think the last time I did was up on Kirklend. That was some trip. Ever seen a Drogol?

**MS:** No.

**NA:** They're enormous beasts — about 10 meters tall. The locals use them for transport when hunting. We rode six of those into the outback for a hunt. It was remarkable. When you're on top of these things you can just see out over terrain for klicks! Right above tree-top level.

One of the few things I *have* been keeping up with is my Dhage[3] game.

**MS:** Really?!

**NA:** Yes, you play? I didn't know. Maybe after we get done talking we can take in a game? We've got a really good set-up for it in the officer's mess.

**MS:** O.K., I'd like that very much. Let me conclude all of this with an ominous question. What is your greatest fear of what the Domain's future may hold?

**NA:** No one knows what the future holds. Uncertainty about the future can create fear, but it can also create excitement. I choose to be excited. We have a great future ahead of us. That much I am sure.

The Imperium as we know it may be physically changed almost beyond recognition, but the true Imperium lies in its founding ideals. No matter what happens, no matter how greatly things change, it's the ideals of the people which keep the spirit of the Imperium alive.

**Footnotes:**

1 *True-daughter/true-son are the current euphemisms for clones.*

2 *Feesle sticks are small twigs from a bush native to Regina. When chewed, they give off a pleasant sweet taste. Their sap works as a mild stimulant, much like caffeine.*

3 *Dhage is a computerized strategy game developed on Rhylanor in the sixth century. It has remained popular throughout the region, but has not spread much to other parts of the Imperium.*

**Norris Aella Aledon, Noble/Ex-Navy**
654AEG Age:57 9 terms Cr500,000,000 (assets) TAS member.
Admin-2, Leader-2, Legal-2, Navigation-2, Rifleman-2, Strategy-2, Vacc Suit-2, Computer-1, Handgun-1, Hunting-1, Liaison-1, Medic-1, Persuasion-1, Ship Tactics-1, Survival-1, Equestrian-0, Grav Vehicle-0, Sensor Ops-0, Tactics-0.
Starport A, Medium Size, Dense Atmosphere, Wet World, Moderate Pop, Hi Law, Average Stellar.
Born: 156-1063.
Position: Archduke of the Domain of Deneb.

➢ **LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD BLACK & WHITE PRINTS?**
➢ **ORDER PRINTS OF MY MEGATRAVELLER INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PRESENT AND FUTURE PUBLICATIONS -- EACH IS NUMBERED AND SIGNED.**
➢ **$10.00 EACH, MONEY ORDER ONLY; SPECIFY PUBLICATION AND PAGE NUMBER.**
➢ **CMDR. BLAIR REYNOLDS**
**4627 HARVARD CIRCLE**
**FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709**

# CONVENTIONS CONVENTIONS!

## Organized kahn-fusion III
## August 10-11, 1991

Location is the New Villa Inn in New Cumberland, PA.

The convention will include: dealers, miniature painting, story telling, over 60 role playing, war, miniature wargaming, sci-fi, and unusual gaming events.

For more information write to: M. Foner's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070. Or call (717) 774-6676.

## P.E.W. Kahn UI
## October 12-13, 1991

Location is the New Villa Inn in New Cumberland, PA.

The convention will include: dealers, and over 30 political, economic, board and miniature wargames events. Guest of honor is Craig Taylor.

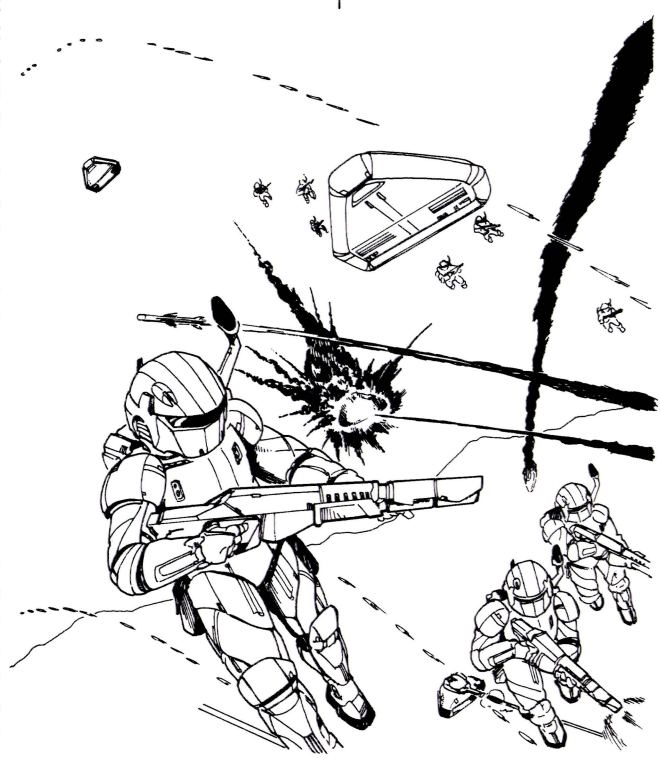
For more information write to the address above or call the above telephone number.

# DRESSED TO KILL

**A TRAVELLERS' CACHE BATTLE DRESS SPECIAL:** *by Tom Peters*

As military technology advanced, the role of the individual field soldier diminished. This trend continued, until the foot soldier was pulled back from the brink of obsolescence by the advent of battle dress powered armor technology. Though, by some standards, vulnerable and slow, battle dress suits have proven to be utterly indispensable to the 57th century armored cavalry unit.

The suit's enhancements to a trained soldier's abilities more than make up for the limitations of its bulk and the downtime imposed by its complex systems. Its formidability is legendary (if somewhat apocryphal) and one cannot ignore the way that even a single suit changes the tactical considerations of a conflict. In many hostile environments, using battle dress is the only way for individual troops to carry out operations with any hope of personal survival.



The suit's onboard computer (battlecomp) provides targeting and tactical displays; the strength enhancement gives a trooper advantage in general physical activities and allows him to haul around the heavy armor; while the sensory enhancements (LI/IR, micro/macro televiewing, remote viewing from other sources, sensitive acoustic sensors and pressure/tactile feedback circuits) give a comprehensive assist to the trooper's normal senses. The armor itself is a multi-layered sandwich which not only protects against various weapons, but also shelters the occupant from extreme temperatures, pressures, and poisonous atmospheres.

Regardless of the battle dress suit's many advantages, it is not without its drawbacks, and is only really effective if used intelligently. Battle dress certainly is not the invincible juggernaut of the battlefield that is often portrayed in fiction.

## A CLOSER LOOK

First, before getting too deeply into our discussion, we should define some of the applicable terms. The image usually conjured by the mention of battle dress is that of the tech level 13+ Imperial service models. Though these are the most widely-distributed models, a bewildering variety of battle dress from other manufacturers and localities exists. Generally, these variants work much like Imperial battle dress, although their designs may be optimized for different activities. Battle dress' relations and lower tech cousins include the ubiquitous *industrial heavy loader*, the bulkier *battlesuit*, and the Scout *walkabout suit* (more about these later). First, let's take a look at common Imperial battle dress.

## BARE (METAL) BONES

Let's start by covering the basics. Battle dress is a powered, strength-enhancing exoskeletal suit, surrounded by multiple layers of synthetic armor. The suit is routinely equipped with a system that matches its infra-red signature to the ambient background temperature — within limits. In a cold environment, the suit stores heat internally until the safety of the operator is compromised, at which point the operator will be advised by the onboard computer to seek a safe place to dump the stored waste-heat.

The outer armor is usually covered by a chameleon surface which can change colors on operator command. As a standard, camouflage patterns include arctic, jungle, city, space, desert and forest. Imperial Marines also have a dress red setting. Legal restrictions forbid any non-service personnel from using this exact setting, as this is the Imperial Marine cavalry's official uniform.

Suits are normally equipped with extensive electronics suites. Typical systems include continental range communicators, a tactical battlecomputer (to manage targets, provide constantly updated situation displays, via communication with a coordinating tac computer), various sensory aids, and built-in weaponry, depending on the specific job of the armor in question. The suits' powerpacks and life support systems provide a sealed, self-sufficient environment for a minimum of 12 hours (or more if an extended system is added).

Perhaps the most useful aspect of the armor is its strength amplification abilities. This system is typically set to double the operator's normal strength. A sophisticated feedback system helps the operator judge how much force should be supplied to a task. There is an override to this system, allowing the user to adjust his strength to whatever the situation requires (with a UPP strength level of 30 being the highest attainable). The higher end settings can't be safely used by any but the most experienced operators (Battle Dress 2+) as damage to the manipulated object, or even the suit, could easily result when operated at these unfamiliar levels.

The amplification system also assists walking, giving the operator effectively unlimited endurance. The operator can

record a standard walk for the specific environment, then set the system to repeat that gait until overridden by manual input. Certain models even include a terrain compensator to this feature, so small obstructions and irregular terrain are automatically accounted for. Though they can be of great assistance, many operators say they feel too "out-of-the-loop" in this mode, and they prefer not to use this feature.

The whole system is built with zero-friction bearings and sound suppression equipment, making this imposingly large machine eerily quiet. This allows a battle dress-suited soldier to sneak up on opponents and strike silently. As one wag put it, "The first sound you hear from battle dress is likely to be your last."

The combination of these systems has led to a versatile fusion of armor and weapon, yielding a durable trooper which can be deployed in any environment where fighting might take place. Without battle dress, the Imperial Marines and high-tech mercenary units would lose much of the versatility their job requires.

**ANATOMY**

At the heart of Battle Dress is a custom-tailored sensor mesh that includes tactile feedback and provides control impulses for the powered exoskeleton. All of these control and feedback signals are processed through a dedicated computer, embedded in the sensor mesh and located in the small of the operator's back. A backup unit is located in the armored carapace, underneath the power and environmental backpack.

The sensor mesh is covered by a tough, thin, porous material which carries sweat away from the operator's skin. Over this mesh goes a standard solid state vacc suit thermal control layer, to maintain the operator's skin temperature at a comfortable level. The next layer is a tech level 13 light-duty vacc suit. Connections run from this skin-tight suit to the environmental system and to the central processor, which coordinates the exoskeleton's movement.

The operator, wearing the mesh and thermal suit, fits into the exoskeletal frame, which comes in six standard sizes at tech level 13, and which has been calibrated to the operator's specific control impulses. This frame, mostly composed of high density composites and alloys, is responsible for 50% of the suit's total weight.

At tech level 15, the custom fitting and calibration of the sensor mesh and exoskeleton is unnecessary. Employment of advanced technology enables these components to readily adjust to any operator's dimensions. Smart bio-feedback systems quickly calibrate the suit to the operator's reflexes and strength. Imperial Marines use a series of calibration exercises to help in their suits' speedy adaptation. With these and other improvements, tech level 15 battle dress can be donned in almost half the time of its lower tech brethren.

Modular construction provides easy replacement of a damaged limb or torso section. Myomer filaments (a synthetic material which responds to electric current in a similar fashion as human muscle fibers) are woven through this modular skeleton and provide movement to the assembly, contracting and expanding in response to control pulses from the computer.

Over the myomers and exoskeleton is an air-tight skin that houses a mylar and cloth-armor insulation, providing overall thermal and pressure protection to the suit. Several ports in this layer allow access to the operator for injection of drugs and connection to the waste-recovery system in the backpack.

Both the life support and power systems can have their endurance tripled with the addition of an extended pack, which may be plugged into backpack-mounted receptacles. The pack also houses the battlecomp and communications equipment, and has on its external surfaces the heat exchange system.

Over this inner carapace are placed the modular external armor segments, and power connections for the plug-in weapon systems. The armor can defeat most personal weapons used in the Imperium, as well as many support weapons. It also provides excellent defense against concussion and fragmentation explosives.

The integrated suit can be donned by a single trooper in about 10 minutes. This time can be cut in half in half by a couple of ways; either by having another person assist in the suiting-up process or by having the suit linked to a standard "mounting frame". A mounting frame holds and positions the suit in such a way as to make suiting-up easier. At tech level 15+, the suit's design enables it to "actively participate" in the entry/egress operations.

This entire assembly weighs just over 20kg and fits in a two meter tall, one meter wide man-shaped package. With the addition of a grav-belt, it can travel at over 100 km/hr and independently achieve orbit in the same amount of time as most grav vehicles. Battle dress can operate in nearly every environment and double even the strongest person's strength. Its sensors can detect a campfire at 500 km and a pin dropping at 5km. In short, battle dress is an impressive package of capabilities crammed into a man-sized space.

**THE SWORD'S OTHER EDGE**

Still, for all of its advantages to the individual trooper, battle dress is not without limitations. The mass of the skeleton and armor may slow reactions and the armor has a few dangerously-weak spots at joints and the faceplate, (where protection is little better than that provided by cloth armor). When at maximum energy use, the I.R. suppression system cannot adequately damp output, and produces clearly identifiable heat plumes. If the local processors are hit, the limb can suddenly freeze in position. Some models (General Products suits especially) are prone to balance problems on low-friction surfaces.

By necessity, a suit of battle dress is bulky and restricts maneuvering in tight quarters. When accompanying non-battle dress-equipped troops, a battle dress wearer will often draw an enemy's heaviest fire — rarely coming out of a firefight without at least some nicks and bruises.

Despite these shortcomings battle dress is still dramatically effective personal armor — its advantages to the battlefield soldier far outweigh the shortcomings.

The trained battle dress user acknowledges the limitations of the technology, avoiding situations which could stress the suit beyond its limits. Such actions could lead to the user disabling his own suit on the battlefield.

**VARIANT BATTLE DRESS**

To basic battle dress, various additional weaponry, armor, computing or communication gear, surveillance equipment (or whatever is required for a specific mission) may be added. Generally, there are three main combat varieties of the powered armor suit:

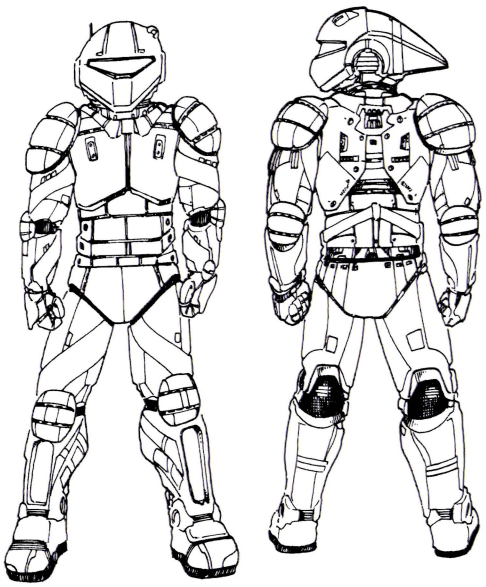
*Forward Observer—*

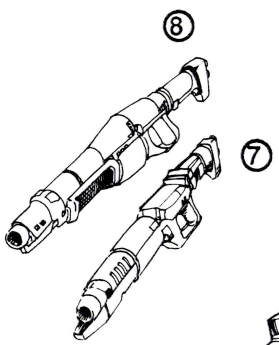
With basic armor, this model is equipped with a modular, arm-mounted laser carbine, directional and scrambled

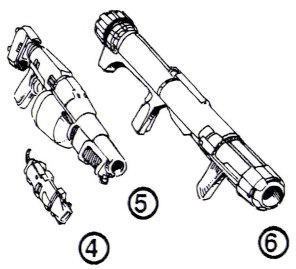
# TL15 MARINE BATTLEDRESS

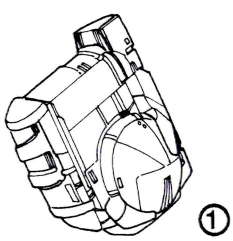
## EQUIPMENT KEY

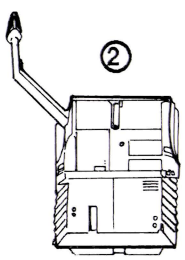
① Extended life support pack.
② Grav flight pack.
③ ECM Module.
④ Arm-mounted laser rifle.
⑤ Auto grenade launcher.
⑥ Tac nuke launcher.
⑦ PGMP-13.
⑧ PGMP-14.

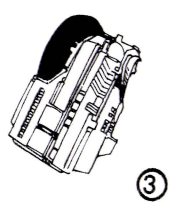


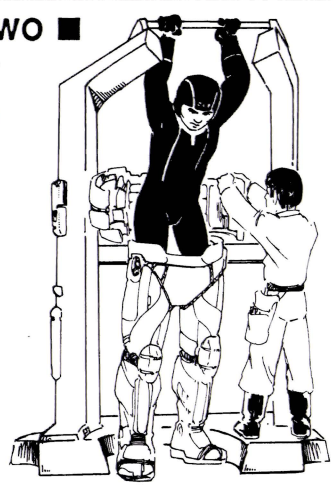



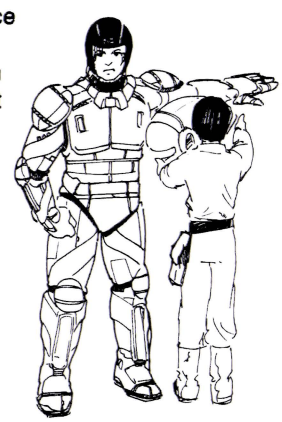

## Suiting-up Sequence

**STEP ONE ■**
Don sensor mesh and thermal control layer.

**STEP TWO ■**
Enter exo-skeletal frame and attach all armor segments.



**STEP THREE ■**
Commence final calibration and circuit checks.



communicator, modular grav belt, and usually includes a small shield attached to the left arm.

*Commando/Cavalry—*
Mounting standard armor, this variant features reinforced joints, laser rifle (fires through optical tube coupling to right arm) with power pack, modular grav belt, smoke and prismatic aerosol dispensers, mountings for drop capsule attachment, a modular RAM grenade autolauncher, and PGMP-13.

*Assault—*
Sporting all the armor of the commando/cavalry version, this suit has an additional armor chest plate and has greaves that extend to cover the knees. Other features include a cloth armor skirt, laser rifle (as above), drop capsule attachments, and FGMP-14 or -15 or gauss rifle.

Obviously, any of these missions can meet zero-g requirements by adding a maneuver pack. The Forward Observer armor lacks many of the reinforcements in joint fittings normally installed and is therefore more vulnerable than standard battle dress (lower armor value by 3), although this is somewhat made up for by lighter weight and greater flexibility. Forward Observer armor is often the preferred type for ship's troops.

Assault armor is very heavy, so the strength amplification is set to a higher level. There is a consequent loss of fine control and a loss of manual dexterity (treat as Dex –4, reduce this loss by 1 for every level of battle dress over 2). It is a truism that assault troops may occasionally be more dangerous to themselves than to the enemy.

It should be noted that there are several tasks for which battle dress is unsuited. In a patrol situation, it is too vulnerable and slow, and its peripheral vision tends to be too limited to adequately spot hidden or heavily-camouflaged snipers. Generally, it is vulnerable in close, hardened quarters (of course, some walls it can just go *through*!). Unless the opposition is heavily armed, or there is a real need for the enhanced strength, it may be better to go with lighter, more flexible armors when doing combat in enclosed spaces. The powered armor suit is a specialized piece of hardware, and should be used only for missions best suited to its abilities.

**HEY, BUDDY, WANT SOME USED BATTLE DRESS?...**

Battle dress is hard to come by on the civilian market. Repair parts are hard to find, the software can be tricky and prone to problems, and the whole set-up is quite illegal without all sorts of permits and bonds. And, by the way, the stripped-down basic suit starts at about Cr200,000! Though lower tech models are available, these suits must be custom fitted and calibrated, adding to the initial cost and leading to the need for more field maintenance. Still, there are places where you can find such things, if you're determined....

Any TL13 or better Industrial world should be able to produce battle dress, and any low law level planet of this type will ask few questions if lubrication fees are paid.

This is not to say battle dress cannot be legally acquired. Any mercenary unit that is registered and bonded has the necessary credentials to allow one of its members to buy such armor. Registered ship's troops also carry sufficient paperwork to allow such a purchase.

For the private citizen, the process of becoming "suit-legal" involves a proving a clear purpose for needing the equipment, a certification test (proving their skill in the hardware's use), purchase of an insurance policy which covers accidental damage caused *by* the suit, and submitting to a background investigation.

Interstellar regulation of battle dress usage is handled through the offices of the Imperial bureaucracy; the same offices that handle ship certification. This means that on most worlds having an A – E class starport, the legal status of the registered users is maintained. The starport officials can inform battle dress users of any local restrictions that may apply to the suit's on-world use (generally, any planet with a law level of 2+ will not allow unrestricted use of battle dress).

Besides just buying a new suit from the manufacturer, there are many ways of obtaining battle dress — from salvage to mustering out with a suit. Many adventures are in store for someone seeking out this specialized equipment, particularly if they're interested in getting a set of surplus Imperial Marine armor. That's half the fun, though. There are few individuals who own such a piece of hardware without a good story about how it came into their hands.

**THE WALKABOUT**

While not having all the combat features of battle dress, a Scout walkabout suit can be retrofitted with most of the offensive and defensive capabilities. With extended life support, and sensors optimized for exploration, walkabout suits are, essentially unarmed, lightly-armored versions of the standard battle dress. The I.R. suppression is usually used to keep from startling the local heat-senses of any native lifeforms. The chameleon camouflage options are retained as well.

These suits are used for long-duration ground investigations (food and water tubes make it possible to live in one of these for a week or more. The smell can get interesting, though — the airscrubber is built by the same contractor that does the Scout/Courier's unit...). The armor is protection against wild animals or intelligently-built artifacts, up to small slug-throwers. As might be expected, a variety of surplus variants of this design are available.

**BATTLESUITS**

At lower tech levels, bulkier battlesuits are available. These are usually 10 to 14 feet tall, and up to 8 feet wide, making use in most interior spaces impossible. They can support all of the features of their higher tech cousins, if the advanced equipment is made available. Though slower and much bigger targets, they can often put out a respectable amount of firepower. For ground actions, their intimidation value alone is something worth considering.

These suits are rarely anthropomorphic, can barely be stored on an average ship (except in pieces or in a large cargo bay), have control systems which are often temperamental at best, and possess a dexterity that is practically non-existent; but they have their uses in lower tech societies or for the "non-subtle"...

**THE HOMEBUILT OPTION**

The last option is to build your own. The standard industrial heavy loader is an easy-to-obtain base to build an armored suit on. Heavy loaders are unarmored cargo-handling exoskeletons providing many of the advantages of battle dress. In higher tech level loaders, the exoskeleton is nearly as compact as that of battle dress. Not that I would suggest converting a peaceful loader into a war

machine, but home defense is getting more imperative in these troubled times...

**USING BATTLE DRESS IN PLAY**

In MegaTraveller, characters often need an edge, and this is one they can aspire to for some time. Whole campaigns can be designed around a group's acquisition of battle dress, or it can be the goal of just one of the adventurers.

Once a character has become accustomed to the capabilities of such a suit (read: received the skill) it would be difficult to consider engaging in certain activities without one. The goal of buying a set of battle dress, like the suit itself, should be used to enhance the *role-playing* aspects of the game. Even after a character has found the suit, the search for repair parts and accessories can spawn new adventures.

Use the quirks of the machine to add realism, even comic relief, to a situation. Have the IR suppression system start spraying steam plumes everywhere, or the chameleon software decide "jungle" is now red and blue checkerboard. On the more dramatic side, you could have your party's fate hinge upon a desperate rescue by "the woman with the battle dress". Perhaps their capture by an enemy could be evaded by use of the *strength override* to perform a death-defying leap across an impossible chasm. This aspect is the domain of the imaginative gamer, and can breathe a sense of life and importance into an otherwise cold piece of technology.

Battle dress is one of the ultimate "gimmes" for players of the MegaTraveller game — if you use it as such, and not just as a soulless killing machine, you'll be rewarded with a new level of role-playing fun.

**BATTLE DRESS FAMILY STATISTICS**

suit type & features mass price

**TL13 Basic Battle Dress**
*Basic armor (armor value = 10)*
*Chameleon settings*
*IR suppression*
*Sealed environment*
26kg 0.2MCr

**TL13 Forward Observer**
*Basic armor (armor value = 10)*
*Standard combat package* (chameleon settings, IR suppression, modular grav belt, continental range directional/scrambled communicator, sealed environment, battle comp, advanced sensor package)
*Modular, arm-mounted laser carbine*
*Personal shield*
27kg 0.29MCr

**TL13 Commando/Cavalry**
*Standard armor (armor value = 15)*
*Standard combat package*
*Arm-mounted laser rifle w/ pack*
*Reinforced joints*
*Smoke & prismatic aerosol dispensers*
*Drop capsule attachments*
*RAM grenade launcher* or *PGMP-13*
29kg 0.36MCr

**TL14 Assault**
*Standard armor (armor value = 18)*
*Standard combat package*
*Arm-mounted laser rifle w/ pack*
*Reinforced joints*
*Smoke & prismatic aerosol dispensers*
*Drop capsule attachments*
*Armor chest plate*
*Knee greaves*
*FGMP-14 or gauss rifle*
31kg 0.40MCr

**TL15 Imperial Marine Assault**
*Standard armor (armor value = 22)*
*Self-calibrating sensor mesh*
*Arm-mounted laser rifle w/ pack*
*Standard combat package*
*Reinforced joints*
*Smoke & prismatic aerosol dispensers*
*Drop capsule attachments*
*Armor chest plate*
*Knee greaves*
*FGMP-15 or gauss rifle*
20kg not commercially available

**TL13 Scout Walkabout Suits**
*Basic armor (armor value = 8)*
*Chameleon settings*
*IR suppression*
*Continental range communicator*
*Sealed environment*
*Advanced sensor package*
22kg 0.2MCr

**TL11 Industrial Heavy Loader**
*No armor*
18kg 0.15MCr

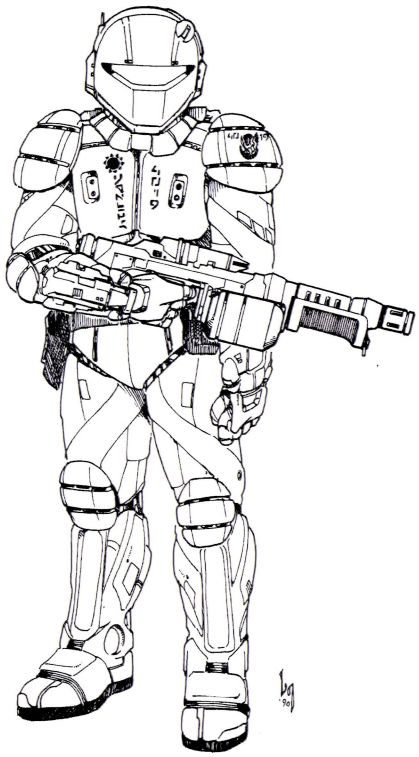
**TL10 Battlesuits**
*Standard armor (armor value = 10)*
*Laser rifle or plasma gun*
*Continental range directional/ scrambled communicator*
*Drop capsule attachments*
*RAM grenade launcher*
*IR suppression*
*Sealed environment*
*Battlecomp*
*Advanced sensor package*
45kg 0.4MCr

# MEGATRAVELLER

## Equipment Sheet

1990 Digest Group Publications. Permission granted to copy for game use.

# COMMANDO/CALVARY BATTLEDRESS



TL13 version illustrated w/ RAM grenade lnchr.

### EQUIPMENT STATISTICS

| *TL* | *Type* | *Vol* | *Wt* | *Price* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | Commando/Cavalry -13 | 4.5kl | 29kg | MCr0.36 |

### SUPPLEMENTAL STATISTICS (OPTIONAL)

| *TL* | *Charge Duration* | *Operating Noise* | *Power Usage* | *Comments* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 12 days | silent | 3.0kw | armor=15 |

### USAGE RECORD (OPTIONAL)

*Each square represents 1 day (24 hours) of usage*

○ TL13: □□□□□□□□□□□□

**CUSTOMIZING NOTES:**

## DESCRIPTION

Commando/Cavalry battle dress is composed of a powered, strength-enhanced exoskeletal suit covered by a carapace of environmentally-sealed synthetic armor. The suit includes an IR-masking system, a tuneable chameleon surface, an arm-mounted laser rifle, drop capsule attachments, smoke and prismatic aerosol dispensers, a scrambled, continental-range comm, a tactical battle computer, an advanced sensor package, an IR and LI telescopic visor display, and a heads-up targeting display.

Provisions for a hand-held PGMP-13 are included, in the form of chest-mounted power sockets. A grav flight pack is included as a modular accessory.

The Commando/Cavalry suit can operate in temperatures up to 1300C and pressures up to 600ATM.

## TASK LIBRARY

To pilot grav-assisted commando/cavalry battle dress:
Routine, Grav Belt, Battle dress, Dex (fateful, hazardous)

To perform strenuous operations in commando/cavalry dress:
Routine, Battle dress, Str (varies)

To target with battle dress heads-up:
(-1 difficulty level), Battle dress, Weapon skill, Dex

To control suit while overriding strength pre-sets:
Difficult, Battle dress, Dex, instantaneous (fateful)

To repair damaged commando/cavalry battle dress:
(varies), Mechanical, Battle dress, Int (varies)

*Referee:* Difficulty depends on damage level. Use standard damage and repair guidelines. Time increments for shop repairs are as follows:

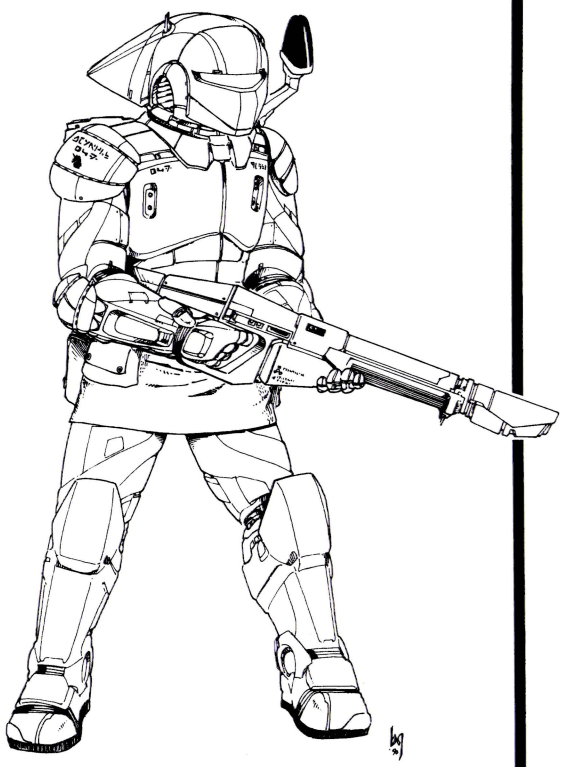
Superficial damage.....1 min.
Minor damage..... .....10 min.
Major damage.....3 hrs.
Destroyed.....10 hrs.

# MEGATRAVELLER

## Equipment Sheet

1990 Digest Group Publications. Permission granted to copy for game use.

# IMPERIAL ASSAULT BATTLEDRESS



TL15 version illustrated w/ FGMP-15

### EQUIPMENT STATISTICS

| | TL | Type | Vol | Wt | Price |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ○ | 10 | Assault Battle Dress-10 | 7.7kl | 35kg | MCr0.6 |
| ○ | 13 | Assault Battle Dress-13 | 5.2kl | 35kg | MCr0.6 |
| ○ | 14 | Assault Battle Dress-14 | 4.8kl | 31kg | MCr0.4 |
| ○ | 15 | Assault Battle Dress-15 | 4.6kl | 20kg | MCr0.5 |

### SUPPLEMENTAL STATISTICS (OPTIONAL)

| | TL | Charge Duration | Operating Noise | Power Usage | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ○ | 10 | 4 days | low hum | 2.5kw | armor=14 |
| ○ | 13 | 5 days | low hum | 2.2kw | armor=16 |
| ○ | 14 | 8 days | low hum | 2.0kw | armor=18 |
| ○ | 15 | 20 days | silent | 1.5kw | armor=22 |

### USAGE RECORD (OPTIONAL)

*Each square represents 1 day (24 hours) of usage*

○ TL12: □□□□

○ TL13: □□□□□

○ TL14: □□□□□□□□

○ TL15: □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

**CUSTOMIZING NOTES:**

## DESCRIPTION

Battle dress is a powered, strength-enhancing exoskeletal suit, covered with multiple layers of synthetic armor. Assault Battle dress includes a sophisticated IR-masking system that matches the suit's emissions to the ambient background. The outer armor is covered with a tuneable chameleon surface. The suit also incorporates a scrambled, continental-range comm, a battlecomputer, an IR and LI telescopic visor, drop capsule mountings, a heads-up targeting display, and smoke and prismatic aerosol dispensers. Modular components include a grav flight module (at TL13+), an arm-mounted laser rifle, a pack-mounted RAM grenade launcher, extended life support module, and an advanced ECM module.

Provisions are made for a variety of hand-held armament, including FGMPs, PGMPs, auto grenade launcher, and TAC nuke launcher.

Assault battle dress has a standard 3x strength enhancement. It is bulkier than regular battle dress and has a corespondingly higher penetration factor. It is also more difficult to control. Dexterity is modified by -4 while wearing it, with +2 points regained(up to the the user's normal dex) for each level of battle dress skill.

TL15 Imperial Marine battle dress can operate in temperatures up to 1300C and pressues reaching 1000ATM.

## TASK LIBRARY

To pilot grav-assisted assault battle dress:
Difficult, Grav Belt, Battle dress, Dex (fateful, hazardous)

To perform strenuous operations in assault battle dress:
Routine, Battle dress, Str (varies)

To target with battle dress heads-up:
(-1 difficulty level), Battle dress, Weapon skill, Dex

To control suit while overriding strength pre-sets:
Difficult, Battle dress, Dex, instantaneous (fateful)

To repair damaged assault battle dress:
(varies), Mechanical, Battle dress, Int (varies)
*Referee:* Difficulty depends on damage level. Use standard damage and repair guidelines. Time increments for shop repairs are as follows:

Superficial damage.....1 min.
Minor damage..... .....10 min.
Major damage.....3 hrs.
Destroyed.....10 hrs.

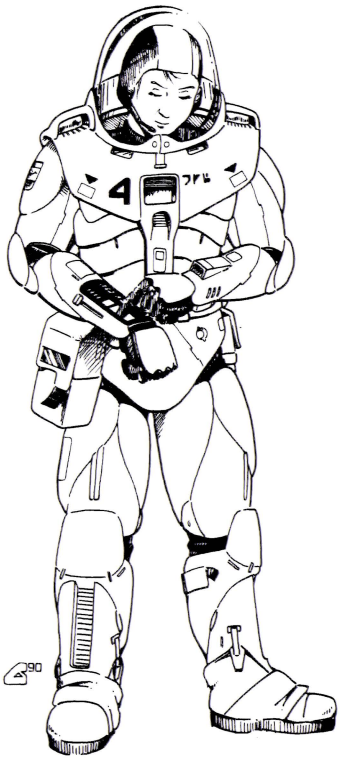
For field repairs, double time and difficulty level.

# MEGATRAVELLER

## Equipment Sheet

1990 Digest Group Publications. Permission granted to copy for game use.

# IISS WALKABOUT SUIT



TL13 version illustrated

### EQUIPMENT STATISTICS

| | TL | Type | Vol | Wt | Price |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ○ | 13 | Scout Walkabout Suit -13 | 5.9kl | 22kg | MCr0.2 |

### SUPPLEMENTAL STATISTICS (OPTIONAL)

| | TL | Charge Duration | Operating Noise | Power Usage | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ○ | 13 | 12 days | low hum | 1kw | armor=8 |

### USAGE RECORD (OPTIONAL)

*Each square represents 1 day (24 hours) of usage*

○ TL13: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

**CUSTOMIZING NOTES:**

## DESCRIPTION

The Scout walkabout suit is designed to provide a mobile environment for IISS personnel exploring new and possibly dangerous worlds. The same strength-enhancing powered exoskeleton is used to increase the functional strength of the user and to allow him to carry extra survey equipment.

The chameleon camouflage and IR-masking systems have also been borrowed from battle dress in order to work unobserved by native lifeforms under study.

The walkabout suit is equipped with an IR and LI telescopic visor, an advanced acoustical sensor system, an integral NAS sensor and "sniffer" bioscanner, and a continental-range communicator.

The suit is cabable of operating in a temperature range of +1300C to -200C and in pressures up to 1000ATM.

## TASK LIBRARY

To use a Scout walkabout suit without incident:
Routine, Battle dress (or Vacc suit), Dex, (fateful, hazardous)

To repair a damaged Scout walkabout suit:
(varies), Mechanical, Battle dress, Int (varies)

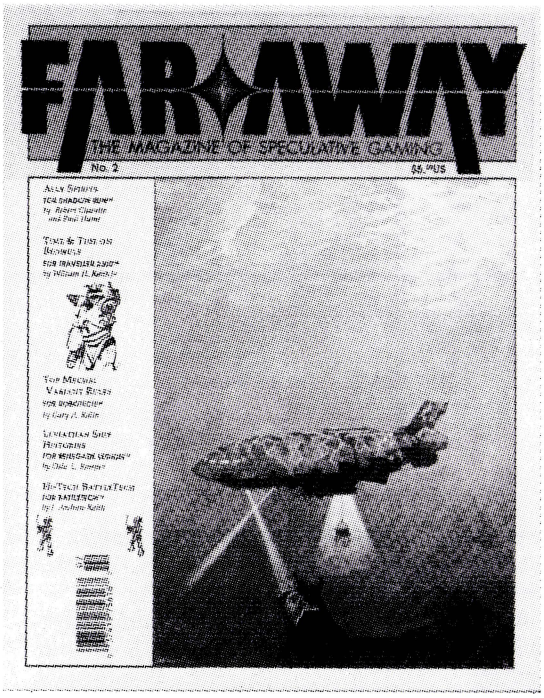
*Referee:* Difficulty depends on damage level. Use standard damage and repair guidelines. Time increments for shop repairs are as follows:

Superficial damage.....1 min.
Minor damage..... .....10 min.
Major damage.....3 hrs.
Destroyed.....10 hrs.

For field repairs, double time and difficulty level.

# Have you ever wanted to go

# Far & Away...??




**Voyage with us**

**Far into**

**...the realm of the barely possible**
**...the future of the human & other races**
**...new worlds of imagination**

**&**

**Away from**

**...Known Space**
**...Any known limits**
**...Our humdrum time & place...**

**Far & Away # 2 * $ 5.00 US * Reserve a copy at your favorite game or comic store or write to:**
**Pacific Rim Publishing Company**
**PO Box 23651**
**Oakland, CA 94623**
**Subscriptions: 6 issues $24.00 US, 12 issues $48.00 US**
**Canadian Subscriptions Please Contact:**
**The Sentry Box 2047 — 34th Avenue SW, Calgary AB T2T 2C4**
**Other Countries: 6 issues $36.00 US, 12 issues $66.00 US**

# SHAREWARE

**MEGATRAVELLER COMPUTER AID DIRECTORY:** *by Joe D. Fugate Sr.*

This column, new with the Megatraveller Journal, is to be a permanent feature of the reborn Journal. Personal computers and gamers seem to go together like jam and bread, so we thought a regular column discussing Traveller software is long overdue.

Speaking of things long overdue, many of you know about our desire to produce software to go with our popular World Builder's Handbook. And you also know the software never has made it to market. We have some rather rough versions of the software, but we have never invested the time or the money to finish off the project. While you may think that surprising, compared to our book publishing business, the software has shown relatively poor demand.

Oh, there are a few of you who are very vocal about your desire for this software, but in fact the demand we've seen has been quite low — probably less than 10% of our book sales. To complicate matters, everybody seems to want the software for a different computer. Each new computer is a new development effort, further splintering the market and dramatically raising our costs.

One of the ironies is the market for "game-aid" software is very small when compared to game publishing (paper) or game publishing (software). To illustrate, Paragon Software sold ten times as many copies of their MegaTraveller game Zhodani Conspiracy in its first month than we sell of our books in six months. And the game aid software market seems to be one-tenth the size of our book publishing market. Put it all together and the game aid software market is only one-six hundredth the size of the "real" game software market.

We've talked to enough of the game software folks to know that spending $250,000 on development of a game is not unusual these days (this includes programming, artwork in the game, and packaging). Now if the game aid market is 1/600th the size of the big-time gaming software market, then if we spend much over $500 to bring our software to market we're funneling money down a rat hole, so to speak. Thus you can see our dilemma. The market just doesn't seem to be there.

Still, we think there is a definite need for Traveller game-aid software (*we'd* like more software to help us with our own Traveller games...). The unfortunate conclusion is that game-aid software has got to be a labor of love with the possibility you can subsidize a bit of your gaming habit by making a few bucks. You certainly aren't going to make a career out of it.

This, then, is the rationale for this new column. We get samples of software every week from gamers who are writing programs for their own use. We'd like to use this column to tell you about the better software we receive, and to tell you how you can buy a copy of it from the programmer. And for you programmer types, if you've ever contemplated writing some Traveller software, now's the time to get out of that armchair. If your software is any good, we'll review it here, free of charge, and we'll tell all those thousands of "hungry" gamers how they can send their money straight to you for a copy of your software. It's a deal you can't refuse (but don't expect to retire on the income).

At some point in the coming months, we also plan to polish off our own software efforts and make them available to you on an "as is" basis, without any fancy packaging or documentation. This way you can benefit from having the software, and we don't have to spend thousands getting it ready for the market — thousands we'd probably never see again. You win and we win too.

## EVERYTHING TRAVELLER

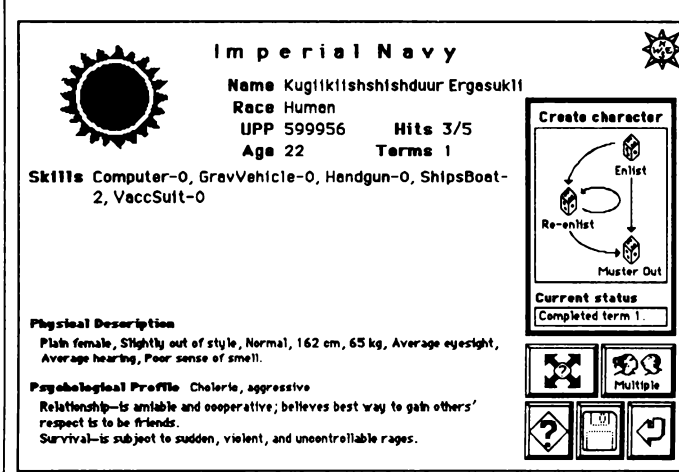
For this issue, we'd like to highlight the efforts of long-time Traveller fan Rob Prior. Rob has been working diligently to assemble a collection of Traveller software and data on computer, and he has some impressive results to show for it. Rob sends us frequent mailings on disk, and we eagerly await each one, pouring over them to see what goodies Rob has sent us this time.

Much of Rob's material is for the Macintosh (which is primarily what we use here at DGP). Rob's programs are written in Hypercard. The noteworthy program he and his friends have been working on is an extensive character generator stack. Each new version we get adds new function and features. Eventually, Rob hopes to add character generation for all the major races, as well as regular Traveller character generation.

Rob's collection of goodies also includes several starship and vehicles designs, with stats written in Microsoft Word (Macintosh). The starship stats often include deck plans in MacDraw format.

If you would like more information on this software or data available for Traveller, contact:

Rob Prior
205 Toronto Street
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 4A9
CANADA


Imperial Navy
Name Kugiikiishshishduur Ergasukii
Race Humen
UPP 599956 Hits 3/5
Age 22 Terms 1
Skills Computer-0, GravVehicle-0, Handgun-0, ShipsBoat-2, VaccSuit-0
Create character
Enlist
Re-enlist
Muster Out
Current status
Completed term 1.
Physical Description
Plain female, Slightly out of style, Normal, 162 cm, 65 kg, Average eyesight, Average hearing, Poor sense of smell.
Psychological Profile Choleric, aggressive
Relationship—is amiable and cooperative; believes best way to gain others' respect is to be friends.
Survival—is subject to sudden, violent, and uncontrollable rages.
Multiple

*Rob Prior's Character Generation HyperCard Stack is a good example of some of the better software being written by Traveller gamers. If you have access to a Macintosh, you owe it to yourself to check it out.*

dis NEWSbriefs
Deneb Information Systems

001-1121

1120: The Year In Retrospect Special

# K'kree Armada Enters Domain

[350-1120] Only a couple of months ago, rumors started streaming out of the Corridor sector concerning the sightings of what appeared to be K'kree starships. As rumors accumulated, the image sharpened. Apparently, a flotilla of six, heavily-armed K'kree starships was closing in on the Domain's trailing border.

Military sources were concerned by the reports. Admiral Sheela Cyusun of the Domain's Navy told reporters that no official word has been received from the Two Thousand Worlds regarding the visit of such a force.

Once the reports were confirmed, Cyusun mobilized elements of the 243rd and 512th Cruiser Squadrons to attempt to intercept the K'kree ships as they crossed into Domain territory. Their mission objective was to challenge the encroaching vessels and ascertain their intentions, but they were prepared for stronger contingencies.

Imperial sources tried to downplay the news. It was feared that a panic could break out in the Domain's trailing systems. The K'kree ships were sighted in the Erita (Deneb 2519) system, but refueled and jumped before Domain vessels could intercept. After weeks of apprehension, the flotilla was finally contacted in the Torm (Deneb 2220) system on 340-1120.

The alien fleet of six 10,000 ton armed transports identified their mission to be the retrieval of all K'kree personnel and assets from the K'kree consulate on Cipatwe (Spinward Marches 3118). With the Domain of Deneb's isolation and border conflicts, the K'kree have chosen to break official contact with the Domain by closing down their diplomatic and trade outposts.

In typically arrogant K'kree fashion, no advance notice of their mission was sent to the Domain. Once the K'kree stated their mission objective to the navy, they broke contact and continued their penetration into the heart of the Domain. The navy has chosen to put the progress of the flotilla under discrete surveillance.

# New Domain Capital at Mora

[255-1120] Crowds choked the corridors, courtyards, and balcony's of the Giyachii arcology when Archduke Norris presided over the official ceremonies establishing Mora as the Capital of the provisional government of the Domain of Deneb. The decision to relocate the Domain's Capital to Mora was based on the planet's superior, central location. "With difficulties manifesting themselves on nearly every rim of the Domain, a Moran capital makes strategic sense", said Norris' seneschal.

The new offices of the Domain will be housed in the ocean-bound Giyachii city. Originally built to house the offices of the sector and subsector governments, the arcology is undergoing an expansion project to accommodate the new offices. The corresponding increase in new administrative jobs has met with favorable response from the local government.

Notably absent from the ceremonies was the Duchess Delphine, the Moran matriarch. Her absence was attributed to continuing health problems which have plagued the 141-year-old leader over the past 17 months. In her stead, her grandniece, the Marquise Elane, attended the ceremonies. The Marquise has been covering the Duchess' post during her bouts of illness and is next in line for the matriarchal post.

# Lucan Calls For Super Weapons

[312-1120] Reports through the Restored Vilani Empire tell of Lucan's latest strategic initiative. In an announcement on Capital, Lucan told the people of his dedication to developing new, cutting edge weapons technology to aid in "forever burying the warped ideology of the assassin, Dulinor".

A collective, exasperated sigh summarized the response from the scientific community. "We are already working around the clock trying to perfect his half-baked super-weapon day dreams. This statement is just his way of cracking the whip on an already half-dead horse", reported one Imperial research station staffer, who wished to remain anonymous.

Lucan's call for a technological deus-ex-machina follows several months of a virtual stalemate between Imperial and Federation of Ilelish forces.

# New Series of ArdenTalks Open

[314-1120] Diplomatic representatives of the Domain are converging on the Federation of Arden to open a new series of diplomatic discussions with the Zhodani.

In a pseudo-reality press conference, Branj Dilgaadin, seneschal to the Archduke, stated that he felt very positive about the new talks. "I think we have the possibility of breaking some new, previously untouchable ground", Dilgaadin stated.

Exact topics of discussion for the Arden talks aren't public knowledege. However, it is certain that one area which will receive attention will be the Domain's proposed annexation of the District 268 sector.

The talks are scheduled to open on 20-1121 and last for three weeks. The Federation has restricted press coverage of the event. With the delegates' return will come the news of the talks' level of success.

# THE FLAMING EYE

## A MEGATRAVELLER CAMPAIGN SOURCEBOOK

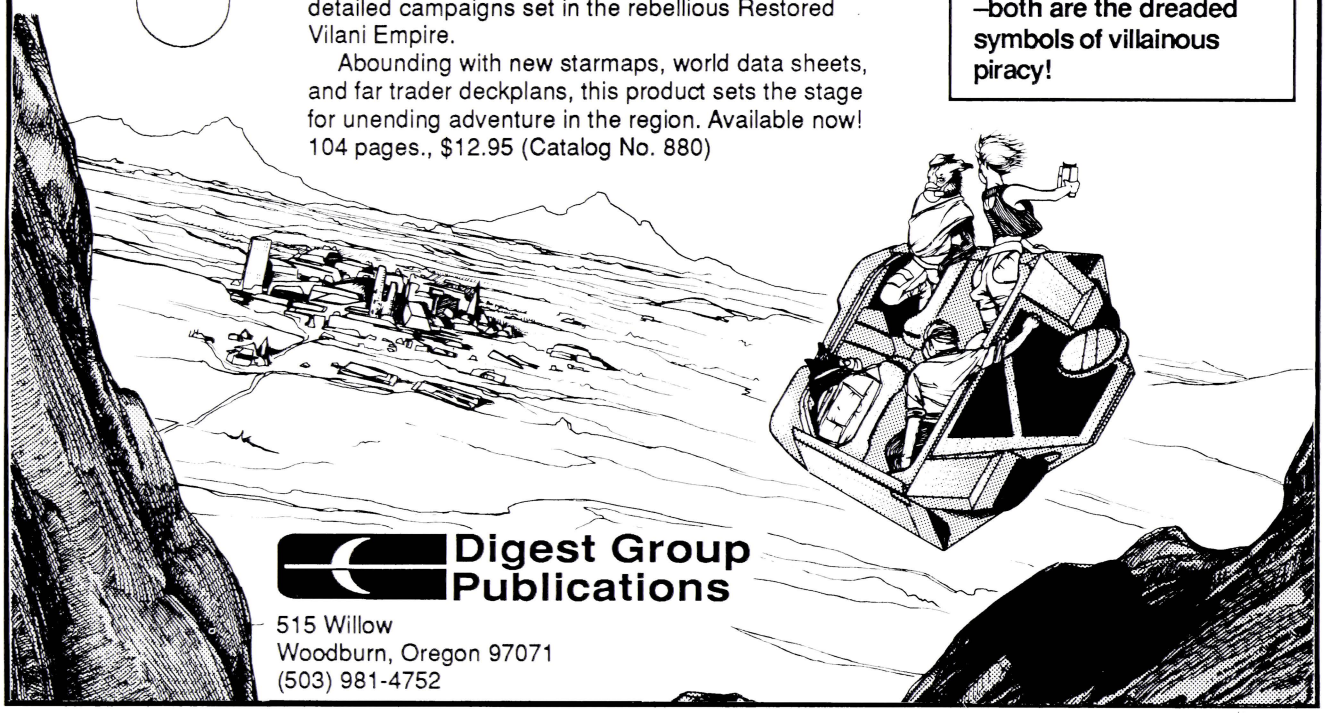
What's going on with the Vilani and Vargr? Find out in TheFlaming Eye: a treasury of background information and scenario ideas guiding you through two detailed campaigns set in the rebellious Restored Vilani Empire.

Abounding with new starmaps, world data sheets, and far trader deckplans, this product sets the stage for unending adventure in the region. Available now! 104 pages., $12.95 (Catalog No. 880)

**The Solomani use the skull and crossbones...**

**The Vilani use the flaming eye...**

**–both are the dreaded symbols of villainous piracy!**



**Digest Group Publications**

515 Willow
Woodburn, Oregon 97071
(503) 981-4752



***In Issue Number Two Of:***

**The MegaTraveller JOURNAL**

Available in June

**Defying the Wolf-**

Pursuing a starmerc ticket, a group of characters is drawn into the Vargr-infested Corridor sector in search of a missing courier ship.

**Fiery Class in Detail-**

Complete deckplans and stats on a vessel common to starmerc and naval units.

**Snapshots of the Occupation-**

You'll experience life under Vargr occupation in the Corridor sector first hand. By *Vilani & Vargr* writer, James Holden.

**And Lots More-**

The return of *MegaTraveller Q&A*, more new equipment in *Travellers' Cache*, and handy referee tips from *Gaming Digest*. See you there!

# MEGATRAVELLER

For a thousand years, the Imperium ruled the stars. Now, its tranquility is shattered by civil war. The once-solid Imperium has disintegrated into many petty empires, each fighting for its piece of the galaxy. It's a dangerous place, and your goal is to survive and just maybe turn the tide.

- The leading science-fiction role-playing game.
- Background coverage of history, personalities, equipment.
- Rules coverage for ship design, ship combat, tasks, animal encounters, character generation, and more.

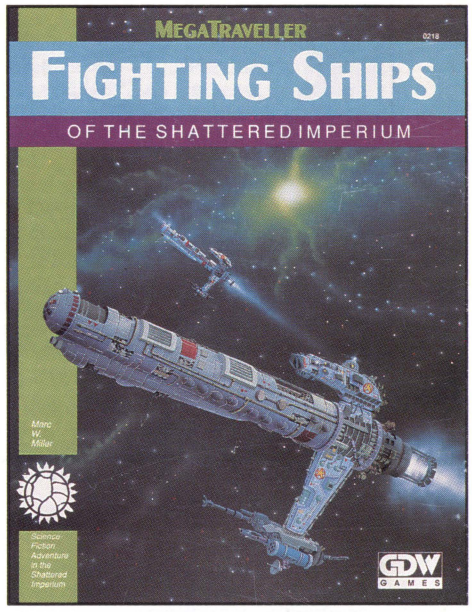
**MegaTraveller.**
Boxed set. *Players' Manual. Referee's Manual. Imperial Encyclopedia.*
Plus a detailed star map of a complete Imperial sector.
GDW: 0210. $30.00.

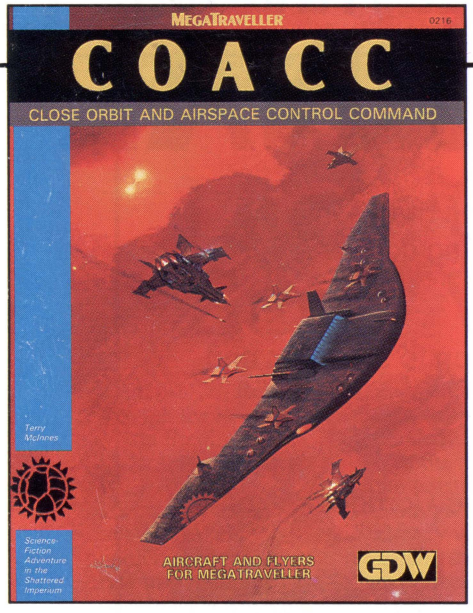
MEGATRAVELLER
At better hobby stores everywhere. Order by mail (add 10% for shipping) or phone (Visa/MasterCard).
309-452-3632
GDW GAMES
P.O. Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61702-1646

# FIGHTING SHIPS of the Shattered Imperium

The ships of the Imperial Navy are in the hands of every Rebellion faction. Here are 58 ships of the Imperial Navy—from battleships to battle riders, from dreadnoughts to escorts, many with full-page illustrations.

**Fighting Ships of the Shattered Imperium.**
96-page book.
GDW: 0218. $10.00.




## COACC

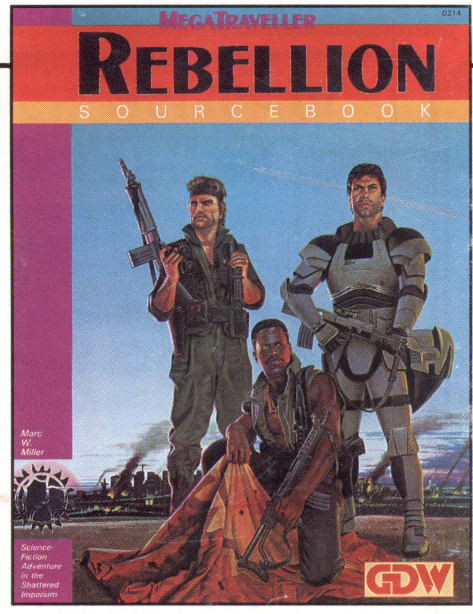
COACC controls aircraft in the Imperium. Here is aircraft pilot character generation, aircraft design and combat, plus a campaign to win the Rebellion on one world.

96-page book. GDW: 0216. $10.00.

## REFEREE'S COMPANION

Rules expansions for the **MegaTraveller** referee: includes large-scale combat, timekeeping, communications, research, mapping, technology, and aliens.

96-page book. GDW: 0215. $10.00.




## REBELLION SOURCEBOOK

A fierce Rebellion shakes the Imperium—each faction fights for a piece of the rich star-spanning empire. Here are the Rebellion's sides, leaders, territories, and equipment.

96-page book. GDW: 0214. $10.00.